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Life's simple pleasures

We had always supposed that one did (or did not do) particular things for no other reason than one liked (or did not like) to do them. Life is no longer so simple. The 'researchers', probing deeper and deeper into our unsuspecting minds, are now assigning to the most innocent actions motives which, to say the least of it, are remarkable and even, at times, fairly reprehensible. No doubt your seaside preoccupation with sandcastles would give them very rich food for thought indeed. For your labours are Sisyphian. You know the tide will inevitably wash your

work away. You know you will be confronted tomorrow with exactly the same stretch of sand - smooth, shining and, somehow, derisory - which confronted you today. And you do not mind. You just aren't worried about it. You aren't worried about anything - and least of all about what is happening at home. You left all that to the Midland Bank. *They're* looking after your financial affairs. *They're* taking care of essential payments. *They're* doing the work. And you're building sandcastles . . . simply because you *like* building sandcastles.



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PUNCH

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The London Charivari

ALTHOUGH it admits that prolonged exposure to "high noise levels" can damage the ears, the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research in its new pamphlet suggests that factory noise in general does not necessarily affect efficiency or increase fatigue. The truth is, I suppose, that workers experiencing upwards of 85 decibels don't know whether they've been sent to Coventry or not, and, unless they are lip-readers, fail to understand the go-slow injunctions of their shop stewards.

Plumbing New Heights

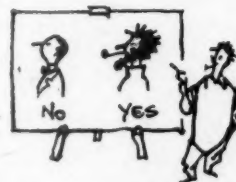
ADMIRERS of Le Corbusier hail the harsh austerity of his Dominican monastery as an eloquent expression of "the new brutalism" in architecture. Architects of this school believe that the elements of a building should proclaim their various functions with bold candour. In the Couvent Sainte Marie



de la Tourette, for example, all the electrical conduits and water pipes are exposed, standing out colourfully against the concrete walls. In Le Corbusier's opinion, as reported by *Time*, "the building's insides are nothing to be ashamed of." New brutalism? Students of British architecture point out that we've had this sort of thing for years.

"...and Here We Have a Brush"

AN artist exhibiting at the moment is reported to be "studio demonstrator" at the art school where he was formerly a student. This is something new to me, even in these days of full employment. Is he a new middle-man, helping out the art master who has the



know-how but not the here's-how? Is he a specialist—someone who can add the difficult hands and feet to students' life-drawings? Or is he an expert on poses, demonstrating to the model the exact slumped posture she will assume anyway, no matter how the pose begins?

Input Output

"IMPACT" has had a long and glorious run. "Facilities" and "amenities" continue high on the list of words indispensable for those who wish to speak or write impressively. But the Top Word of the moment is surely "input." Here is a neat use of it, from a Motoring Correspondent's account of the new road safety research track at Crowthorne. "Another useful aspect of study will be in connexion with the factors affecting"—anybody read Quiller-Couch's essay on Jargon recently?—"factors affecting the motion



Holmwood

"Darling, you can't possibly put Harry Wixton next to Mrs. Cadnum—they're both Socialists."

and response of a vehicle when known steering inputs are applied. There will also be facilities for studying the behaviour . . ." And so on. Dare one hope that before long those outdated "Turn Left" signs will be altered to read "Apply an Anti-clockwise Steering Input"? That would be a real amenity, outpwise.

Snowmen Come Clean

SIR EDMUND HILLARY, who intends to shoot at abominable snowmen in the Himalayas with drug-laden hypodermics instead of bullets, told a reporter that his personal inclination was "to put the wretched creature to sleep, examine him carefully, and let him go." I take it he is going to have what they call a "truth drug" in his hypodermics, otherwise his examination will be incomplete. Given a couple of days with a skilled interrogator, the beast ought to yield up some fascinating information about where it comes from, what it lives on, and why it is so abominable.

The Thrower's Art

IT has yet to be proved to me that there is any real advantage in throwing instead of bowling at cricket. At Lord's, Griffin, no-balled by umpires Buller and Lee, took 4 for 87, while Statham, trundling away in orthodox style, took 11 for 97. Couldn't the Imperial Cricket Conference arrange a match at Lord's between bowlers and

throwers? Various English names leap to mind for the latter XI, and it would be a pretty compliment to Griffin, after his exemplary behaviour under difficulties and embarrassment, to offer him the captaincy. But to prove my point, and ensure its own future, Griffin's team would have to arrange to lose.

Leave Well Alone

ONE by one our anchors of faith snap; now, according to an eminent orthopaedist, Byron didn't have club foot but dysplasia, or a thin calf and a small foot with lack of ankle movement, though eye-witness Trelawny, who lifted the poet's pall, vouches that the feet were perfect. I shall go on, pace the experts, refusing to believe that Achilles was as well-heeled as any other Greek, that Nelson was merely troubled at Trafalgar with a touch of conjunctivitis, or that Dr. Johnson took plug-money for advertising someone's soap for schoolboy complexions. This is an unrewarding argument; let us keep our Cromwells, warts and all, and not try to think that Naaman went for a swim in Jordan just to cool off his nettlerash.

Running at a Loss?

BRITISH RAILWAYS' latest full-page advertisements show passengers on suburban trains enjoying a



"Reminds me. Won't be long before Soccer starts up again."

"new outlook" (which seems to be the driver's back, just as though they were on a tram), drinking coffee in what is described as "a bright, friendly bar" (though the barman looks as though he suspects they're going to dodge off without paying), saving time on journeys to the Kent coast (an opened library book and an opened newspaper presumably showing there's time for only a short read) and relaxing in newly designed carriages that are "cleaner, more spacious." But they seem more spacious because they are half empty. It is a little difficult to give an exact count because you cannot see whether some of the seats are designed for a comfortable two or a cramped three; but there seem to be fifty-one seats in the different photographs and only twenty-two of them are taken.

Extra Cover

EVERY other book that comes into the office these days seems to be either about cricket or South Africa. Next publishing season, thank Heaven, it will be possible to combine the two.

Golden Words

PURISTS may affect to notice nuances of difference between the prose styles of Arnold Bennett and *Reveille* (current week's billing: "Father Cried As Daughter Stripped") but the rates of pay are not so wildly unlike. Bennett used to boast of earning half a crown a word; *Reveille* advertises (in the Top Paper, too) £1,000 for 15,000-word serials, which I make 1s. 4d. a word. Mind you, Bennett's stuff didn't have to be "packed with exciting action, suspense, thrills, and have a passionate love interest," the present advertiser's requirement.

The Last Indignity

A stuffed tiger in a museum at Worcester has had to be destroyed because it was full of moths.

TIGER, tiger, burning bright
In the furnace, well alight!
Whose the eye that did not see?
Who forgot the D.D.T.?

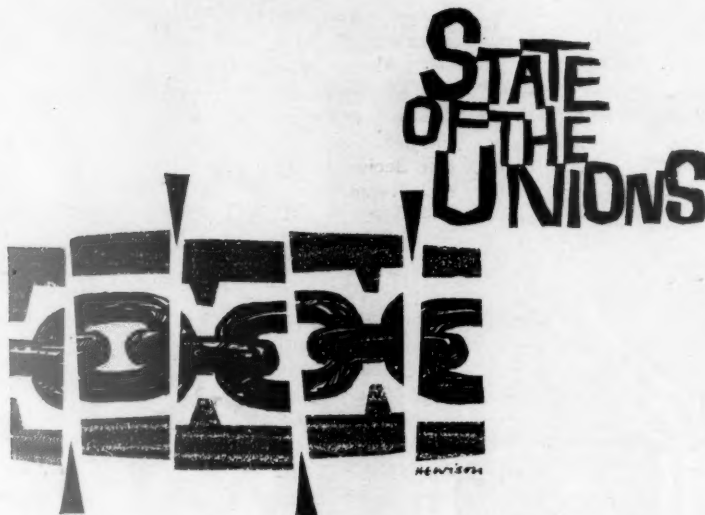
Whose the hand that signed the chit?
Who the fiend that rakes the pit?
When the beams of morning rise,
Blast him with your two glass eyes!

— MR PUNCH



"It's either inflation or deflation. Let's keep him in bed."

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WANTED: A NEW PATTERN - By JO GRIMOND

THE most obvious effect of the trade unions is to keep the Tories in power. They perform an almost miraculous double function. They relieve the Government of a good deal of trouble by keeping a fair measure of industrial peace and sweet reason (there are far fewer strikes per thousand workers in this country than in the U.S.A.). At the same time, like a lightning conductor, they earth all the public anger over restrictive practices, strikes and high prices, in the trembling bosom of the Labour Party.

The traditional picture of the unions as the champions of the great inarticulate "working class" has little resemblance to reality. For instance, it is probably not true that they have taken the lion's share in forcing up prices since the war. Competition for labour up to 1955 led employers to bid up the price irrespective of union demands. High employment, to which all political parties are pledged, also means high wages. A statue to Lord Keynes should stand beside a bust of Ernest Bevin at T.U.C. Headquarters.

Nor have the unions done so much as their more naive members might think to improve conditions in industry. It is not only because of full employment and wages that "fings ain't wot they used t' be." The wicked boss and the chapel-going cloth-capped workman have both disappeared. We now have a middle-class society with middle-class standards, average earnings over £14 a week and the telly to teach us manners—none of this is due to the unions.

In fact the nineteenth century world in which the unions were born is gone: gone along with Capitalism and Socialism in whose simpler heyday they flourished. If a visitor from outer space were now to drop down and ask to be shown the last living coelacanths from that time he might do worse than visit Transport House.

Do we then need the unions at all? Are they so ill-adapted that they cannot survive? It is high time this kind of question was asked if we are to develop an acceptable modern industrial society. The cloak of secrecy in which the unions have tried to wrap themselves has done them great harm. It is preposterous that restrictive practices, strikes and union regulations are now, along with the monarchy, among the last subjects which cannot be openly discussed in decent society. Just consider the outcry which goes up if it is proposed that a strike should be debated in Parliament. Yet discussed they must be, and the first question is "Do we need unions at all?" and if so, for what?

It is quite likely that the more enlightened firms in this country would be capable of providing management which could look after their employees satisfactorily. More and more firms are coming to see that high wages are a good thing. More and more firms are sprouting all sorts of fringe benefits for their workers.

The general development of a new outlook, a more homogeneous society, Keynesian economics and Welfare democracy have greatly diminished the need for someone to stand up for a mass of under-dogs well able to bark for themselves.

But there are still many firms which are either unable or unwilling to reach the standards set by the best. There is still exploitation, even if it isn't of precisely the same kind or as widespread as it used to be. And labour is still an interest: the unions still represent a legitimate pressure group. No doubt in an ideal world where everyone played perfectly synchronized harps pressure groups would be out. But in fact they are very much with us: in the imperfect world in which we live they are as common as gambling or drink, and perhaps less harmful.

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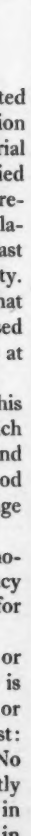
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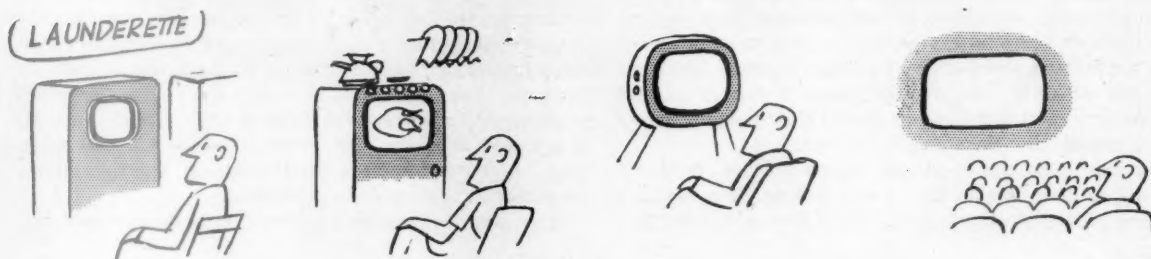
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industrial organization is a reflection of the sort of industry we have. The shape of industrial relations and therefore the type of unions we get is primarily determined by management. What we want is a long-term strategy for industry in which the unions can play a useful part.

The impetus for such a strategy should come from the employers, who should aim at a steady increase in productivity and announce that they are ready to see a substantial share of this go by way of higher real wages to their employees. When it comes to sharing this out there seems at first to be a conflict between the need to reward efficiency in individual firms and the need to maintain an over-all advance. There is a strong case for development towards the centralized

the main features at least may be agreed at industry-wide level and possibly even between the T.U.C. and the B.E.C., scope must be left for variation lower down.

For here we come up against the second apparent dilemma. While the large number of unions involved in each industry leads to demarcation disputes as in the shipbuilding industry, to reduce the number of unions and to give more power to the centralized control at the top of the union structure might well put the union leadership still further out of touch with its members. Already some unions, such as the T.G.W.U., are so big that they cannot see their own toes. This dilemma too can be resolved. It can be resolved by a self-denying ordinance at the top to leave more power on the



bargaining which has been tried in Scandinavia and other Continental countries. But this must be reconciled with differentials to compensate particular skills and to encourage mobility and good management. I do not think that this apparent conflict is irreconcilable. We should advance towards a system of wage contracts. The attempt to regulate wages by rather rigid national agreements such as have been tried in Sweden or Holland has run into trouble. But we have much to learn from these countries. Our system of wage negotiation relies on a series of negotiations in different industries and with different unions. It has led to unrelated attempts by various unions to better their position. In the railways, for instance, the existence of three unions leads to unnecessary difficulties within the industry. The claims of the railwaymen too are considered without sufficient attention to their effects on other industries. The Scandinavian system of more centralized bargaining enables the over-all economic situation to be taken into account. The equivalent of the T.U.C. in Sweden has more power than the T.U.C. here. The agreements are embodied in a limited number of contracts which run for a definite time and are subject to re-negotiation after a definite period. Disputes on the interpretation of these contracts are settled by a Labour Court. Strikes are illegal during the currency of the agreement. Even if new contracts are not agreed, in some cases a ballot must be held before a strike. In West Germany, where somewhat similar developments have taken place, only 62,000 working days were lost by strikes in 1959 against 5½ million in this country—proportionally far more than the extra number of people employed here.

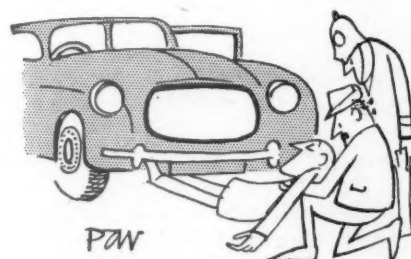
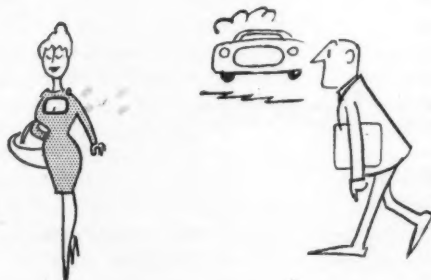
There seem at least to be two lessons from abroad which we should certainly learn. We should settle wage contracts for definite periods. When it comes to the nation-wide negotiation of wage rates for certain industries, then, while

shop floor to iron out grievances and arrange matters within the agreed general framework and by reducing the competition between unions by federation rather than by amalgamation.

The other great reform needed in our industrial relations is a great increase in co-ownership and participation by the workers. The unions should welcome the trend towards this happier state. They must regard management as their partner, not their enemy. In fact management works, and should be treated as working, for the unions as much as the shareholders. Once this is established by having a common interest in profits and a common stake in the success of industry, everything becomes easier. It is the division in industry which is out of date and creates the problems: but sometimes the unions seem to have a vested interest in its continuance. Liberals have made specific proposals for encouraging industry to give shares to workers (as many firms have already done). We should relieve such shares of some taxation. For instance, we would allow the amount of any company's contribution to co-ownership schemes to be calculated at 110 per cent for taxation purposes. Further, to enable workers to spread their interests outside the firms in which they are employed, we have adopted Mr. Copeman's "Save-as-you-Earn" Plan, by which a proportion of wages can be set aside in special accounts for investment. These savings too would escape taxation unless withdrawn. But there are many ways of reaching the goal. Mr. Scott-Bader and Mr. Lewis, for instance, have made over shares to their workers as a Group, and I.C.I. direct to individuals.

But co-ownership is not in itself enough to bring in the millennium. It is no substitute for high real wages. It must be accompanied by participation and consultation at all levels. In firms like the John Lewis Partnership or that of Mr. Scott-Bader it is inextricably interwoven with the fullest explanation to the workers of what the firm are

trying to do and with worker co-operation in the enterprise. The unions should now take the keenest interest in good management—there is no substitute for it. They should prod those firms which lag behind in management. And they should encourage workers to take every sort of interest in their industries. They should demand time and opportunity for useful co-operation by shop stewards in the factories and during working hours. There is to-day an immense difference in the relationship of different firms to their workers. This is not merely a question of wages. Vauxhalls pay good wages. So do other motor manufacturers. But Vauxhalls, because they treat men as human beings, have much less industrial trouble than some of their rivals. They have got



away from the extreme system of piece-rates. They explain what is happening. They grasp grievances early. The same is true of many other firms and industries, e.g. I.C.I.

To sum up, the new look at which the unions should aim must start in their own organization. They should use more of their money for union purposes. They should be equipped with a much stronger research organization to enable them to approach their job scientifically. They could most usefully give greater power to the Registrar of Friendly Societies to investigate cases of maladministration. "Wild cats," rebelling shop-stewards, even the E.T.U.—all the troubles which an establishment has to suffer cannot simply be ignored or suppressed. They are symptoms of diseases which ought to be cured. They are signs that a union (and probably an employer) is not doing the right job. There should be fewer unions but greater devolution within them.

But more important still is a new look at the job they do. They must accept new methods with glee, not reluctance. Their insistence on certain restrictive practices, e.g. the

retention of men in the newspaper industry after their jobs have disappeared, is symptomatic of a self-defeating and reactionary outlook. They must be wholeheartedly on the side of industrial expansion—their role being to ensure that it is shared, not stopped. They should not be afraid of some up-to-date syndicalism. The technicians and administrators in, say, the atomic power or electronic industries are certainly capable of taking a share in the direction of their industries. The solution for quite large sections of industry, including some of the nationalized industries, is a degree of syndicalism coupled with competition.

All this does not amount to doing away with the present unions. It does amount to putting a new face on them and turning it in a different direction. It would greatly widen their appeal. It would strengthen our industrial power. It would make it much more worth while to be a trade unionist. The unions, to survive, must attract the younger people who are entering industry. To attract them and to get them to come to union meetings the unions have to convince them that something worth while can be done at such meetings. It would prove that the unions were shaking off some of their nineteenth century suspicions. Far too many ordinary things which you now meet in everyday life still make Low's cart-horse shy—there are far too many "BOO" personalities in the lives of many union officials—

management, owners, industrial psychologists, economists and even financiers and politicians can all be "Hurrah" personalities if rightly handled—and the unionist's life will be much happier.

Other contributors in this series will be:

WOODROW WYATT
THOMAS BALOGH
LORD BIRKETT



On the Entertainment Front

"'Portrait in Black' as a play was set in a squalid section of London. We've put it in lush San Francisco. It plays better now."
—Hollywood Film Producer quoted in the *San Francisco Chronicle*



"Oh good, here he comes to sell us eggs
and butter and that sort of thing."

The Battle of the Beaches

By E. S. TURNER

I WOULD never presume to teach the Mayor of Scarborough his job. If he says it is his duty "to protect the holiday-maker from being bombarded by advertising stunts" then I respect his views.

It seems that twenty-four organizations, including several national newspapers, were all set to commit nuisances in Scarborough—giving away money, parading pretty girls in bikinis, and that sort of thing—but they have been told to think again.

Something must have happened to spark off the Mayor's protest. Perhaps it was the thought of being beset, for the fortieth time, by small boys leaping up with "You are Mr. Lobby Lud" and demanding the prize of the day. Or perhaps he was annoyed with his publicity manager for lending the mayoral limousine to be converted into a float representing Pomona, Ceres and Mass Circulation. More likely, he was

exhausted after persuading Mr. Richard Dimbleby not to investigate methylated spirits drinking in the town.

Summer can be a very difficult period for seaside mayors. Unless they take a firm line, the day's diary begins to look like this:

- 9.30 Service of Dedication, Gingham-Cola Sky-Writing Flight.
- 10.00 Attend heats, *Sunday Star's* Merriest Widow contest.
- 10.15 Receive delegates to Jingle-Writers Annual Convention.
- 10.45 Open *Daily Drum* Smooching Parlour.
- 11.00 Assist Nancy Spain to open bookshop.
- 11.30 Present *Daily Wallop's* £4,000 seaside bungalow to winner.
- 11.45 Judge Hairy Chest finalists (*Hairdressers' Monthly*).
- 12.30 Cocktails with Association of Circulation Managers.
- 1.00 Celebrity Luncheon, with Mrs.

1970, Strand's Lonely Smoker, Miss Judo, etc.

- 2.30 Award prizes *Sunday Shine* Glamorous Grandmother contest.
- 3.30 *Concours d'élégance* of Mobile Fish Supper Shops.
- 4.30 Kissing contest, Coliseum, sponsored by Lipstick Federation.
- 6.30 Cocktails with Association of Circulation Managers.
- 7.30 Grand Gala Dance in aid of Circulation Managers' Widows and Orphans Fund.
- 10.00 Barbecue and Sing-song by Peace Pledge Union.
- 10.30 Fireworks by National Coal Board.

But the point is, we must all try to live together. What do holiday-makers themselves think about advertising stunts? Mr. Bert Richards, of Huxtable, says: "We must always remember the

kiddies. My two boys, aged nine and twelve, are dead keen on bathing beauty contests. When that Sunday paper brought down a coach-load of models in swim suits for the fans to photograph you should have seen how Jim and Alf hacked their way to the front. They used six reels of film each and got some shots anyone would have been proud of. Does the Mayor of Scarborough want to stand in the way of youth?"

Mr. Stan Smythe, of Bolton, said: "What's all this talk about stopping people giving away samples? Do they think we go to the seaside for fresh air? In one day last summer I got three packets of corn plasters, a box of travel pills, a cat comb, a tube of mustard, a white jockey cap, two funny faces to stick on the soles of the wife's feet and an interesting booklet about trusses."

Said seventy-year-old Mrs. Eliza Grimm: "I'm getting too old to read the sky-writing, but it helps the children to spell. If you ask me, the sea could do with a bit of brightening up at night. What happened to all those boats with electric signs that used to sail up and down at Blackpool?"

Miss Sara Steele said: "A very refined gentleman from the *News of the Globe* gave me a free pantie set for being the best-dressed girl on the West Pier. You don't catch the Mayor of Scarborough doing anything like that, do you?"

What is the attitude of Fleet Street? "Some of these resorts," said a *Daily Monitor* executive, "are so mean they try to charge you twopence on every balloon you send up—even when they sail through the window of the Mayor's Parlour. They wouldn't give you a dandelion towards a battle of flowers. We try to help these towns by running advertising supplements, but you have to beat the shopkeepers over the head with a stick of rock before you can get a six-inch double out of them. When we did an ox-roast at Eastsea we were mobbed by starving holiday-makers from the boarding houses, yet the landladies said we were lowering the standards of the town."

A *Sunday Star* spokesman complained that in some resorts grandmotherly by-laws nearly fifty years old made it impossible to advertise on the cliff face. A proposal to explode a mine of leaflets in the dingle at Brightnor had been turned down. His team of fly-posters

was having a particularly difficult season.

An unusual complaint came from a film company's publicity officer who said he had asked permission in Westpool to give away green carnations on the promenade to advertise a current attraction but had been treated with marked discourtesy and a complete lack of understanding at the Town Hall. The managing director of the Sudsy Corporation revealed that, as a condition of being allowed to blow coloured bubbles from the civic fountain at Littlesea, his firm had been compelled to open two free foot-cleaning clinics on the more polluted stretches of the beach. "It is nothing short of blackmail," he said.

A town clerk who did not wish the name of his town to be mentioned said: "The only test to be applied to a stunt is: Does it make people want to spend money in the town? If it does, then I don't care what they do, so long as they don't do it in the street and frighten the horses."

Finally, a spokesman of the advertising profession said: "If people don't like advertising stunts they can always go to Frinton. I do."

I only hope the Mayor of Scarborough finds this helpful.

☆

Convenient?

"Public Conveniences 800 yards."
Notice in Orpington High Street



Which? Where? Whacko!

By R. G. G. PRICE

"DON'T you see yourselves as scourges?" I asked in a disappointed tone. I had hoped that the new Advisory Centre for Education, a sibling of the Consumers' Association, would not just be replying to inquiries from parents with judicial summaries of information about schools but would expose bad ones. I assumed their periodical *Where?* would go at least as far as *Which?* in giving details of bad buys. Mr. John Vaizey, the secretary, explained that, whatever the private opinions of himself and the chairman, Dr. Michael Young, the co-operation they were getting from the educational world was much too valuable to be dissipated by attacks on a small minority of blackspots. A.C.E. was not even going to say "This school is better than that." It was concerned simply with telling parents what kind of choice they had and how to pick out a good secondary modern school and answering their inquiries with hard fact. It sounds as though many parents are going to find them useful and think them well worth the ten bob a year it costs to join. (They live in Bethnal Green: 18 Victoria Park Square, E.2.)

I should think that even deadpan recounting of facts could be pretty damaging, and I am perfectly sure that once Mr. Vaizey, who is, after all, already known as a tough commando on the educational front, gets really going he will find himself drawn into controversy, whether he likes it or not. One of the weaknesses of English education is that while everybody makes snooty remarks about headmasters and councillors and proprietors of private schools and teddy-boys and old boys and embittered class teachers and parliamentary complacency, there is not much specific, stinging, salutary criticism.

I was hoping that *Where?* was going to print things like this:

SHUPHAM GRAMMAR SCHOOL FOR THE SONS OF GENTLEMEN

Although the prospectus claims it stands in its own grounds, when you get right up to it you find all that shrubbery really belongs to the cemetery next door. "Fully qualified staff" means, in most cases, G.C.E., O level. Mr. T. Pinchin, who takes the Upper Sixth for Classics and Divinity, coaches

the First XV, First XI and Shooting VIII, is Housemaster of School House, produces the end-of-term plays and concerts, is Scoutmaster and Cubmaster and is Chairman of the Debating, Literary, Philatelic and Handwork Societies, was dismissed from the Consular Service for pilfering. The boast that boarders are weighed fortnightly does not mention that the scales are never tested by the Weights and Measures Department. The examination success claimed ignores the fact that the boy had seven months' intensive cramming after leaving the school.

CHUMLEIGH MAGNA COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL

Operative 4 gained admission to the B stream, sub-stream 11. He reports that the standard of staffing and equipment is high. Results are good. Discipline is maintained without undue severity. Mr. Hawtinglass wears a toupee and this tends to undermine his subject—Economic Geography. Accommodation for bicycles is inadequate.

SCREEP JUNIOR GIRLS' SCHOOL

Although praised for its architecture



"He pipped me on taste and texture."



"The others seem to be getting on much faster."

in a self-congratulatory brochure published by the County Council, the school is shoddily built. Pupils leaning too heavily against the walls of the cloakroom can divert the water supply. The headmistress has written innumerable articles in educational periodicals but spends very little time in the school. The deputy-head is always ready to sacrifice teaching to organizing litter-clearance. Operative 9 reports that the mistress taking nature study in the upper forms was unable to recognize three common seaweeds. The prevailing wind is S.W. and blows from the Corporation dump.

GREYMINSTER

This minor public school has only one really quotable old boy, Major-General Sir Hubert Pribham, and he is the author of *St. Paul, Letter-writer* and *Sayings of Stonewall Jackson*. It is going gently downhill under the present headmaster, a compromise appointment between two strong candidates in 1933. Operative 7 reports that the prefects are given excessive powers and the second master is generally believed to have been blackballed by a London club. Economy in the laboratories results in the distortion of many aspects of science. Food is adequate and samples analysed show no undue proportion of preservatives or decaying matter. The beds in C dormitory are too short.

WICKERY LODGE

This residential nursery school advertises freedom, love and home cooking, but the standard reached in handwork and music is low. Operative 13 obtained a post on the staff with an unsatisfactory reference (Model C). There have been several cases of children being issued with a worn-out abacus and detaching and swallowing beads. Miss Primrose de la Tour, who produces fairy plays, has an infectious Northumbrian accent.

ULCHESTER SECONDARY MODERN

The buildings are magnificent. The staff is large, well qualified and enthusiastic. There is a plentiful supply of good textbooks and demonstration material. Unfortunately the school is dominated by the Red Slashers gang. The wastage-rate of pupils is high. New boys have to dance on live coals. Lots are drawn for new girls. The extent of the use of home-made bombs is beginning to cause concern to the Education Committee.

ST. HROSWITHA'S COLLEGE, OXFORD

Teaching in most subjects is sound, if tedious, though in theology it consists of little more than listening to essays and mumbling "Very good. Don't I remember your father?" The Master's long-awaited edition of the Catullan Apocrypha is no nearer completion and doubts of whether he has even

begun it are having a degenerative effect on the esteem in which learning is held in the college. The attaching of the new Chair of Ballistic Engineering to this college has resulted in the addition of a dipsomaniac Tasmanian to the hazards of the front quad.

JUDHAM HIGH SCHOOL

Exceptionally good examination results are obtained at the expense of...

Unhappily, it does not look as though *Where?* is going to be an educational popular paper. Useful, yes. Interesting, yes. Even entertaining. But lid-removing, I'm afraid not.

The Conversations of a Codfish

"I gather the sound is rather in the nature of grrumph. I understand that this noise is not only confined to the love-making activities of the cod. It also apparently appears when the cod are engaged in other matters."

Mr. Hare, Minister of Agriculture

As a method of wooing his goddess
The language employed by the
cod

When engaged in seducing a coddess
Is monosyllabic and odd.

The scientist sulkily mutters—
And proves it by mountains of
bumph—
That the solitary word that he utters
Is a syllable sounding like "grrumph."

But it all sounds exceedingly scrumfy
When the Minister tells us he
learns
That the cod appears equally grrumpfy
When employed upon other concerns.

We are told that the feminine codfish
Lays two million eggs in a day.
So the cod—this exceedingly odd fish—
Can hardly have leisure for play.

Would he prove a successful seducer
His address must be brutally flat,
And no doubt as his morals grow
looser
The terser and triter his chat.

— CHRISTOPHER HOLLIS



"Good heavens, man—not my time and motion."

The Shepherd and the Private Eye

By MARTIN CROSBY

JUST after I finished my stint as a British Private Eye I was grievously wounded by a slug from Raymond Chandler. It was an article in which he dismissed us B.P.E.s as a pretty uninteresting posse—in literature anyway. Books about us, he reckoned, could be classified as "the best dull writing in the world."

I am neither old enough nor young enough to confuse literature with life, but still . . . *dull*. It stings. Of course I admit that I didn't get slapped by many nymphomaniac-depressive blondes in Spanish-type houses. I'll even admit that the beginning, when I was interviewed and hired as assistant by George Binkston, Inquiry Agent, was pretty dull.

It was in an English-type terrace house full of asymmetrical furnishings that seemed to have been in the deep freeze since George got married—I should say about 1929. He was fairly well glaciated himself, too, and remained so impassive while I unveiled my enthusiasm and suitability for the job that I thought his sensory-motor batteries had perished. He chugged over a little, however, when, rightly guessing that he was going to take me on because nobody else had applied, I inquired about the nature of my duties.

"Do?" he said, staring at an oxydized-copper flowerpot. "It isn't so much what you do. It's . . . well, it's just being there really."

"There?" This was evidently going

to be good practice for grilling stubborn witnesses.

"It's down at the docks. You see, there's the regular police if it comes to a proper arrest, and some big firms have their own men. It's just that if you're always there, hanging around, it has what you might call an effect. I'll take you down and show you."

So I was in no better than a matt-finish mood when he pushed me into a near-vintage Morris and drove me to the Labrador Dock. Here he showed me a little shack where I could shelter from the rain and brew up, and introduced me to a large policeman known as Big Mack.

"His real name? Can't say that I've ever heard it. One of the things down

here—you'll have to get used to using nicknames. They've all got them. See that thin fellow in the Army overcoat? He's called the Shepherd."

In the next few days I brooded over the other nicknames. Some were pretty obvious, like the Can-opener or Haversack Jack, and I remember one little Welshman called simply and dreadfully Evans the Haulage. I also racked my brains pointlessly over a gangster known as the Vicar, seeking some euphemistic irony until I noticed that he always began his addresses to his mates with the words "Ah, men . . ."

The men themselves lost no time in seeking me out and pumping me. They immediately christened me Wyatt Earp and manufactured a fantasy that the shack was the sheriff's office. They left me mugs of milk and cryptic messages that outlaws were roosting in the local pub, which at once became the Saloon. One of them, I thought, showed signs of galloping straight through this fantasy over the edge of derangement. He was a skinny youth with long dirty-yellow hair and an outward squint. Every morning he would clip-clop up to an imaginary hitching-post, fling away the reins, shove his hands into the belt of his jeans, crouch like a tomcat, and then advance with the usual boardwalk stalk.

"Come out, Airp," he'd chant in a toneless sort of Texan Scouse. "I know you're in dair. Come out 'n' fight like a man."

Then he'd screech with self-satisfaction and clip-clop off.

Before long I was convinced of two truths. One was that I'd never catch any of these men stealing anything. Most of them were extremely intelligent, and they all had a gift for gratuitous mischief that would make Iago look like Mrs. Dale. Moreover the regulations at the docks are so Byzantine that no newcomer could ever hope to catch out an old hand. Whatever they were up to, they were in the right. If you'd caught them red-handed they would have proved it was the incarnadination break, laid down in the reign of Lady Macbeth.

The second truth was still more chastening. They all felt sorry for me. Nobody, they reasoned, would take on so pointless a job as mine unless he was pretty hard pushed. They angled for the sad secret that had brought me so

low, and offered me honourable jobs on the hook. Instead of milk, they started to leave me mugs of overproof rum. They also left me racing tips which often came up, although I was too timid to back them. This, obliquely, did me some good. When Evans the Haulage asked me what price I'd got and I steadfastly denied even putting a tanner on he eyed me with great respect and said "Man, you're a deep bloody fish." Big Mack, the Jacobite policeman, shared this opinion, and word soon got around that I was nobody's fool.

I took to staying in the shack and reading. Nothing serious, just some Goldoni that I had a mad idea of adapting for the telly. Naturally this soon got around too, and respect increased. I was not only deep, I was educated deep. Some of them retained a smattering of Eighth Army Italian and would yell "*Come sta?*" as they passed. Their fantasy about the shack, too, was altered; they treated it as a mountain inn. Blondie's act changed to match. He would now approach with his hands stretched across his stomach, scream a few bars of "*O Sole Mio*," and hiss lubriciously, "Hya, maestro. What say you'n me go downtown and grab ourselves a coupla bella bambinas?" I

abandoned any pretence of detection and announced that I was retiring the next Friday.

They were very quiet during my last day, and I became alarmed that they might be planning some enormous coup to coincide with my departure. So anxious was I that I even interrupted Big Mack in the middle of a long lecture about the deterioration of English morals since Culloden and hinted at my fears. He was huffed. He knew what they would be up to, and though inevitably sordid it was not, he thought, illegal.

His prophecy proved true about five o'clock when a little deputation arrived, headed by the Shepherd, cap in hand. "We've brought you this," he said, "for being good company and a good sport." And he handed me the cap, which contained three pounds eleven and sixpence.

I may be dull by Bay City standards, but I know what to do with that much money and five dockers. We went to the pub, or Saloon, or Albergo, and shifted the lot in black-and-tans in an hour and a half. Not gay, perhaps, especially when Blondie borrowed an electric guitar and sang the rest of "*O Sole Mio*."

But not dull.



"Talk about tall, dark and handsome!"

UMPIRES, REFEREES AND
GENERAL ASSURANCE
SOCIETY

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OWZAT!

The Weekly Journal for Umpires, incorporating 'Round or Over'; 'White Coat Weekly', etc. etc.

SLEEPY

It is fatal to doze in the field. Something might happen

Suck a
PEPPO-STICK

"It Looks Like a Bail"

EDITORIAL

IT seems that we are always recommending changes in the Official Laws in this column, and we make no apologies for so doing. "What was good enough for J. W. H. T. Douglas is good enough for me" may be all right for the Players, but Umpires must move with the times.

May we therefore draw attention to Law 46, and the long-standing tradition that in any appeal against the light "it is the light as it affects the striker which is the deciding factor." Our point is so obvious that we wonder we have not raised it before, viz., how is an umpire to decide whether or not a batsman (who under modern slowcoach conditions may not in fact be a striker) can

see? Surely the vital factor should be the light as it affects the umpire? Mr. E. W. Swanton, as is well known, has been agitating for yet a third interpretation, that the important thing is the light as it affects the commentator, but we would remind Mr. Swanton that umpires came before wireless telegraphy in any form. Let Mr. Swanton and other men of influence instead champion the umpire's cause, and ask themselves how *they* would like to be watching Griffin's elbow, Dexter's bat and Waite's gloves at one and the same time under a ten-tenths thunder-cloud at Old Trafford!

But I suppose we should be grateful that the Advisory County Cricket Committee have at least shelved the smaller ball.

ROY WEBBER'S CORNER

Village and Club Cricket are rich in umpiring records, and the year 1925 outstanding. In that year, A. Pilcott, playing for Little Wameley v. Col. Bott's XI, umpired for half his own side's innings, giving five batsmen Out (one of them twice); himself went in to bat, in pads and umpire's coat as time was pressing, scored 28, gave out his fellow-batsman l.b.w.—a mild man who retired to the pavilion without protest—gave himself out for obstruction; and, when Col. Bott's men batted, bowled at one end throughout the innings (8 for 19) and, umpiring at the other, threw down the remaining three wickets. Local advocates of Brighter County Cricket lobbied for his appointment to the official Umpires' List, but nothing came of it.

It was in the same eventful year that B. H. Wetford (East Rumbler C.C.) sent three players off for eating.

ARE OUR SIGNALS OUTDATED?—IV

Noise

No one denies that cricket is noisier than it was, with helicopters clattering overhead and crowds doing the slow hand-clap. Many a snick now passes unheard that in Trouncer's day would have sounded like thunder. The hand cupped behind the ear, as a sign that the umpire heard nothing, would keep tempers on the field equable and cost nothing. More open to dispute is Umpire Frith's suggestion about the shout of "No Ball." Frith points out that umpires are in danger of straining their voices to pierce the prevailing hubbub, and suggests that a simple device would enable the umpire to administer a small electric shock to the batsman on the delivery of a no ball. Electricity travels faster than sound, so that the batsman would get a little extra warning. But it would be an irreparable loss if the umpire were deprived of one of his most important means of impressing his personality on the game.

Last month's article on throwing and dragging has produced a remarkable response from readers, with many suggested signals. We reproduce the most interesting on the right.



"He's throwing"



"He's dragging"



"He's throwing and dragging"

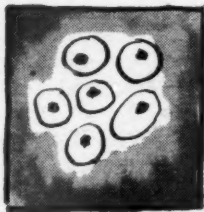


"He's pulled my trilby down over my eyes so that I can't see what's happening."

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The Pebbles You Can Trust

SOME HEALTH TIPS

DON'T remove the bails with an over-dramatic flourish at close of play, even if the TV cameras are watching. You are not as young as you were, and painful back injuries can result.

Do make sure of comfortable footwear. Even three days in the field in tight boots can be purgatory. H. W. Bagwood (Staffordshire) was dropped from the Minor Counties List in 1878 for persistently groaning "My feet are killing me" during bowlers' run-up.

DON'T move too fast at changeovers. Smouldering pipes can easily be fanned to life in the pocket, and even if a burned thigh is not sustained, it's no joke counting with a pebble that's been lodged in a red-hot bowl!

DON'T (except with very slow bowlers) try to focus your eyes on the bowling crease as the ball is delivered and then instantly refocus on the batsman at the far end in time to see the ball arrive. Continued focusing and refocusing can damage the eyes and confuse the brain. Experienced umpires have learnt to squint at one end. It doesn't matter which, though Elia Boothroyd (now retired) used to maintain that squinting at the far end made l.b.w. decisions child's-play.

— W. Grace, M.D. (No relation)

CORRESPONDENCE

SIR,—In common with many others watching the Worcester-Glamorgan game I was horrified to see the square-leg umpire fall over while signalling a leg-by. In my day it was a recognized thing that during the preliminary "knock" by the players the umpires practised standing on one leg—which, of course, is not as easy as it looks. One good tip is to turn out the toe of the supporting leg to as wide an angle as possible. An even distribution of players' caps and sweaters is also an aid. But practice, practice, practice is the only complete answer!—H. Edgar Foleshill, Sevenoaks

SIR,—Many are ready to raise a laugh at the expense of the umpire. It is hard to see why, unless it is a mere nervous reaction, like jokes about death and other unpleasant episodes in life. But need we play into their hands by sending them out into the middle in coats of ludicrously disparate lengths? If the TV toppers can all have their skirts the same distance from the ground, or even members of the Womens' Services on parade, surely it can be managed for two umpires. But it always looks as if the tall ones have got the short ones' coats on. No wonder a titter so often runs round the spectators.—Brian Piggish, Wonerh

SIR,—I know you like an umpiring anecdote. When P. W. Butterson was giving guard to Frank Woolley the batsman positioned his bat and said loudly, "Two leg." P.W.B., who had a "dry" wit, responded with, "The usual number, I believe." Shortly afterwards he bought a house in Finchley.—Arthur Cream Dinger (100 next birthday), The Manse, Penzance

SIR,—In common with your reader who signed himself "Old Lag," I feel that umpires generally could learn much from our brethren in the other legal profession. But I cannot agree with him that wigs would enhance our dignity on the field. They would be hot and uncomfortable. But the use of the black cap for "out" decisions would certainly be impressive.—Edgar Thuwaite, Painstwick

CHESTER CUP

The Frank Chester award for this month goes to Umpire S. R. Boot of Bacup (Lancs.). In a League match he no-balled the "home" professional five times in an over for unfair tactics (using nail-file on seam of ball) and in the very next over dismissed three consecutive appeals for lbw from a bowler bowling left-arm round the wicket and outside the sight-screen. Well done, Sid!



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ANY OLD UMPIRE's coats gratefully received. All gifts acknowledged. Army & Navy Stores (Sports and Culture Section), Vitebsk, Belorussia, U.S.S.R.

ARCHAEOLOGISTS. Have You Read "The Hambleton Man"? Thrills of a little-known dig that disclosed a skeleton and six smooth stones. (Foreword by Frank Lee.) 6s. 6d. all outfitters.

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FOR SALE. Genuine phonograph cylinder of W. G. Grace appealing for catch at wicket and Curly Rimmer on the "Not out." Very rare. Offers to Crickedisks, Marylebone Rd.

CONFERENCE NEWS

The last get-together of the Midlands Branch was held at the "Blue Sight-screen," Burslem, Umpire Foulough in the chair. Umpire Crompt read a paper on "Wind Velocity in Relation to Stability of Bails" and a lively discussion ensued. Umpire Wardle reported a curious incident in a match at Porthall where he had had occasion to reprimand a visiting batsman for appearing without a shirt against a very hostile fast bowler. (Note: there is nothing in the laws about the batsman's attire above the waist.) Umpire Wood was severely censured by the Watch Committee for knocking up a return ball ("It were done in self-defence" he said) thus enabling a Crewe bowler distantly related to Mr. Wood to make a smart c. & b. which dismissed Grantham's top scorer and perhaps led to Crewe winning the B.R. Inter-junction Cup for the fourth year in succession. Umpire Foulough ruled, on an objection, that evidence of previous censurings of Mr. Wood for conduct during matches (whether B.R. matches or not) was inadmissible. Umpire Hewison called for a clarification of the word "normally" in note 4 to rule 25. Does it, he asked, mean dress as normally worn by the umpire in question or dress as normally worn by umpires generally? What of Umpire Bigg's ear-muffs? (Laughter). There was a disturbance in

(continued on page 706)

OUR BOOK REVIEW

Books on umpiring continue to tumble from the presses, but Ronald Bolfin's *Thumb in the Sward* (Batter and Fritter, 9s.) is probably the only one to deal throughout with the state of the field of play. The whole business of covers or no covers is exhaustively discussed by eminent authorities, and the chapter on Outfield Grass in the Villages is instinct with the romance of the great old game. Mr. Bolfin, we feel, would be happy with the field alone; the arrival of the opening pair must seem almost an anti-climax. An appendix gives some invaluable tips on the removal of grass-stains, and the question of sawdust quality is raised at length. A book for every umpire's shelf.

Gwyn Thomas's School Days



3. Flannelled Fool

Summer lends itself to madness: but being a cricket coach is carrying it too far.

SOME people are disturbed by the amount of devotion lavished in this country on dogs. Others are quietly vexed by the love and dedication that goes into the average cricket square. Most men want some inviolable acre of paradise in the centre of their lives. The cheapest way to this end is some insensate bit of pride in, let us say, race, sex-pride, or, most usual, belief in the talent one knows one has but upon which society has not yet made or ever will make a call. Or it might be a patch of turf, superbly tended and unforgettably emerald.

Such a patch is the one now being lovingly rolled on the field of the old school. When we move from here it will be transplanted sod by sod with the care of a skin-graft. The care is a fitting memorial to the man who was its father and mother. He wore this bit of green like a face.

His name was George. After four years' immersion in trench mud in the first world war he had spent an equal number of years in a sanatorium in Breconshire. There he had been doomed to spend most of his time staring at hills and rock and the shadow that seems always to hang around those things. Sunlight, greenness and flatness became his ideal. His winters were a grey and grouchy concern with mathematics which he taught, and a splenetic yearning for the coming of May and the pitching of the first stumps. He ordered a massive roller and organized squads of boys to drag it up and down the pitch. He always claimed the boys loved this exercise, that they were grass fetishists to the same degree as he. I never quite saw it that way. The boys always reminded me of those Israelites in Cecil B. deMille's first great Bible epic, dragging those monstrous carts on which rested the raw materials of the Pyramids and occasionally immolating themselves under the wooden wheels.

I have often seen those roller-draggers discussing among themselves whether they could possibly be worse off if they

slipped and got themselves worked in with the turf. Had that happened George would have tried a cricket ball on them and if they had shown the right degree of spring and pace he would have paused long before winking them out.

When he was on dinner duty in the summer term he upset more digestions than anxiety. He had a sawn-off cricket bat which he used as a weapon and with the help of this he could take fifteen minutes off the duration of the average dinner. He would go stalking around the tables with his curious, crooked stance, his face a fist of intense ferocity, taking a whack with his little bat at any boy he thought was adopting a flippant or dawdling approach to his meal. The mere sight of that upraised bat was enough to make the most laggard eater shoot through his cabbage like a locust. And George was happy. In that way he could get a dozen more relays of serfs on the heavy roller and he could win for himself a few more minutes coaching at the nets.

When I joined the staff he was convinced that I had a long and honourable record as a cricketer. I tried without success to put this right. His years of war and sickness had set him beyond the reach of argument. He could not believe that any life which had survived such hazards as his could possibly be wrong. Had he been in any way capable of error he would surely have slipped at some point along that fantastic tight-rope and died.

"I spotted you as soon as I saw you," he said. "A natural action. A rough diamond perhaps by the standards of the coaching handbook, but born for the game. The eye of Grace and the foot of Trumper. I've been waiting years for a man like you. Working side by side we'll win it this year." And he mentioned the name of some championship cup awarded to the best cricket team of the season.

I tried to explain. I told him that in my village there had been twenty-five men with exactly the same name as myself. Between us we had shared over the years a considerable burden of guile, credit, debt, obloquy and the rest of the human cargo. One of these men had, indeed, bloomed as a

cricketer. He was the manic-depressive son of narrow-minded, restrictive parents and he had seen the faces of Knox and his father on every loose ball and slammed it at once out of the borough. As a bowler he took a run so long he added hours to the life-span of every match. It was generally regarded as a deep-set tic of revulsion against games of every sort. As he galloped slowly out of the deep grass to begin his assault his approach had to be flagged to prevent the fielders slipping into a protective inertia. The last three strides of the run were a progressive convulsion that had him, more than once, sending the ball back in the direction he had come from. He frankly overdid it and landed himself with a surgical belt named for its firmness after Offa. George was convinced that I was this man and sometimes inquired after my belt and my reactions to a bill I was supposed to have received after being sued for skying balls beyond the range of any detective system.

I explained to George that my own cricketing had been minimal. I had read and heard much of that fine tradition in

England which associated the game with long, sunlit evenings, with the white of the players' uniform vivid and assuring against the steady green of the village square with its immemorial inn in the background and the landlord stepping forth with a foaming pot to greet each batsman as he came back from the wicket. It was a fine picture. Born with that background I would have been for it. There was only one inn in our village that had anything like an open space in front of it. That space was not green except for a few patches of primæval mould. And it was so minute that any game of cricket played there would have half the fieldsmen crouched in the bar of the inn, willy-nilly, and not for the sake of dissipation. And if the landlord had ever advanced toward an approaching batsman with a foaming pot the batsman would have been well advised to duck. The only person we had ever seen moving about that square dressed in white was a sleep-walker with a taste for snowy drapery, and he turned out later to have been making his way consciously towards another house.



"At least we're probably not as disappointed as the people who should have got this one."

I belonged to a casually formed back-lane group and I emerged as a bowler with a cunning line in balls that went in off the gas-works container which overshadowed the cobbled area where we played. On that site it would have required pneumatic drills to pitch stumps in the conventional way. This club was eventually ruined by a pigeon keeper who became fed up with the way in which our better shots to leg went banging into the sides of his cotes, giving his birds a kind of shell-shock, and a sideward carriage due to standing on one leg in the cote waiting for it and trying to minimize the shudder by having as few limbs as possible fixed squarely on the floor. This unfitted them for racing and when launched they achieved standards of obliquity that brought a reproach from the league that organizes pigeons and their fanciers. Their owner later trained them to land on us in numbers as we were on the brink of something decisive with bat or ball. This, on top of a rigorous training in Bible stories that showed prophets nudging nature into acts of malignity against sinners, was too much and we went back to quoits.

George listened to all this but he said he had not yet met a first-class cricket man who did not play down his own fine record by making pawky jokes about it. But he admitted that he had never heard anyone being as pawky as I.

"You'll be a coach of genius. You've got a flair for the unorthodox that'll give our boys a tremendous edge over teams trained by text-book conformists like myself. No, no, that's just what I am. I can't deny it."

That was not what I was going to challenge. I didn't know what sort of conformist George was. All I wanted to tell him was that he was hoisting me on to a gibbet of misconceptions and that I wanted to get off. But stopping George in the middle of a cricketing mission, short of bringing in a hired gun, was not possible.

So he assigned me on two nights a week to duty at the nets. I settled on the game like greenfly. The players struck me as confident and skilful, and when George was not around I stretched my length on the ground, my head resting against one of the long canvas bags in which cricketers transport their kit from game to game. I grew torpid as the grass odours thickened in the early evening heat, and I even grew

sentimental about the click of ball on bat and the intensely clean, reliable look of the performers. I do not recall saying a single useful word during those two seasons. I intervened just once. I told one boy to lengthen his run. He did and never came back. He had been press-ganged by George into this activity and the hours at the nets were jugging up his paper round.

But a master in the company of boys cannot abdicate responsibility altogether, and George had spread among them the myth of the talent I had once shown in village cricket, wayward but brilliant. Time and again some young batsman or bowler would turn to me for a comment and if my eyes were not closed at the time they expected to get one. This put me in a fix. Everything I saw them do delighted me and I had them all tabbed as Hammonds and Larwoods. But a man who is supposed to be a coach cannot everlastingly be saying "That was fine, fine. I wish I could have done it half as well." A coach is a critic and he has to point out faults. So I took to varying my tactics by frowning, shaking my head and saying tut-tut, regardless of what move had just been executed. This simple method destroyed the confidence and style of some of our best players. When they urged me to explain my disapproval I would put on the rather demented look I had often seen on the face of the original cricketing Thomas, the one who had sacrificed his stomach walls in the cause of pace delivery, and say "If you don't feel it in your bones here and now you'll never know." Just once, after staring at a practice intensely during a cloudy interval, I thought I had stumbled over something useful about the angle at which one should bend over the bat. I expressed these thoughts and brought into being the most complete method, short of turning up at the wrong field, of leaving a wicket totally undefended.

The players quietly reported me to George as a lunatic who was out to do in the game, but he told them that some of the finest characters in *Wisden* had been notorious for their gruff eccentricities. My manner might seem a bit devious at the moment, but give me a few more seasons and my real quality would become clear and all would be articulate and cogent. No one has ever seen anything more clearly under the good cool light of eternity than George saw cricket. From some torn corner of his psyche he saw some healing current in the game that would bring even the most refractory zany to heel.

Next week: **Disintegration of the Umpire**



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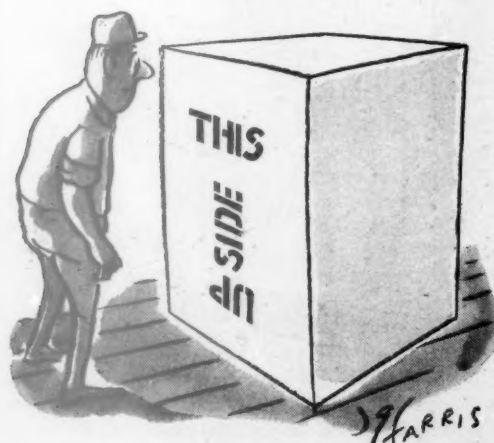
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The Manchester Official Railway Guide

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Our Man in America

P. G. WODEHOUSE provides all-round coverage

THE educational authorities in Denver, Colorado, evidently think they have got something, but I am not so sure. Their latest idea is to engage school teachers by weight. If the weight is right, that proves the applicant knows all about the Quantum Theory or calculus, and she gets the job. The Denver Health Service has listed a minimum and maximum poundage. Eight-stone-four is the minimum and ten-stone-two the maximum, so when a candidate for a vacant post comes along who tips the scales at nine-stone-three they know they have a treasure in whose hands they can safely place the training of the young mind.

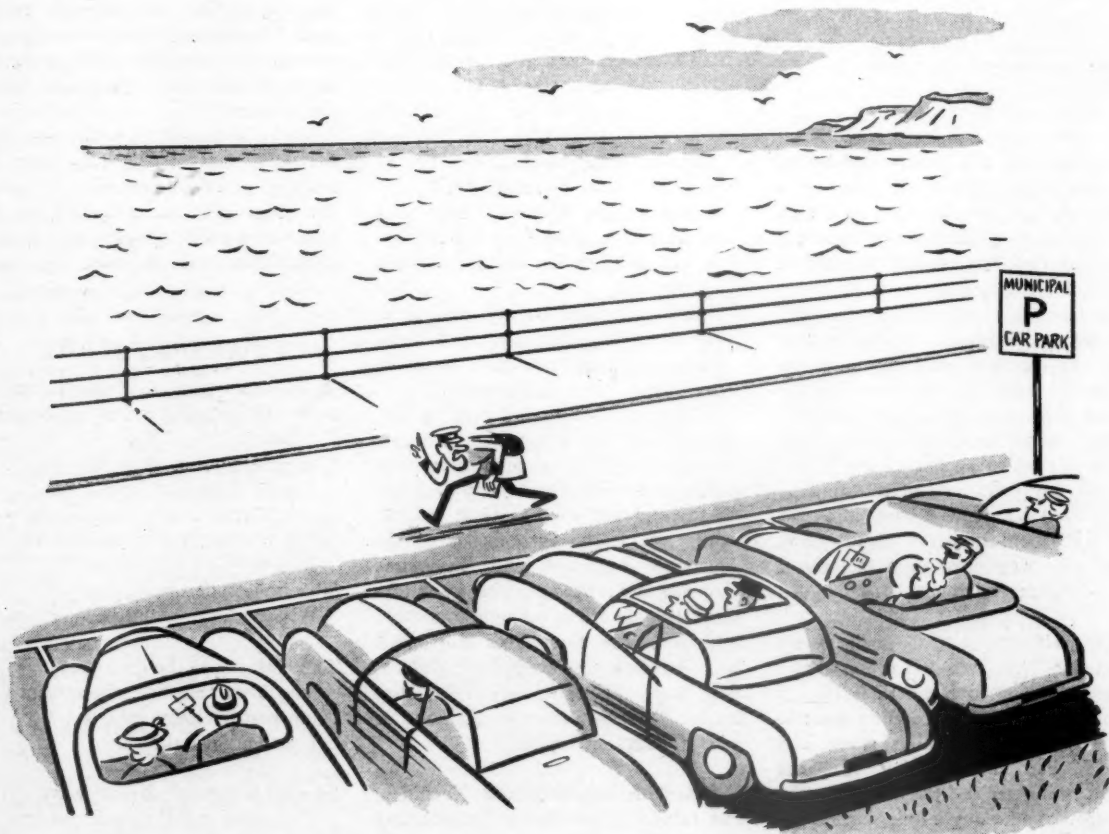
The reason given for this new departure is that teachers must be

"physically, emotionally and mentally fit adults," and something—I don't know what—has prejudiced them against featherweights and welterweights. Well, best of luck, Denver, Colorado, and may you make Life and Death and that vast For Ever one grand sweet song, but, as I say, I am not so sure you are on the right lines. After reading *The Blackboard Jungle* and the daily items in the papers about young scholars stabbing their instructors with flick knives one would think that a far better way of finding out a teacher's capabilities for teaching would be to ascertain how quick on the draw she was and how good at Judo.

They have been having a discussion

in one of the papers about the defects and merits of rattlesnakes, and speaking in defence of these reptiles Mr. C. G. Harwig of Philadelphia, who has been studying them for thirty years, points out that they are the only thing in American life that the Russians cannot claim to have invented and so ought to be looked up to. (Very difficult, of course, to look up to a rattlesnake unless it is on the side of a ditch and you get into the ditch, a policy not to be recommended to any but the heavily insured.)

He added that they like human beings and want to be loved by them, an opinion that clashes sharply with that of Jack D. Rains of Tucson, Arizona, who says humans "bore rattlesnakes stiff." One does not know how he



"Beg pardon."

THEN AS NOW

Fastidiousness at the seaside is still an inhibiting factor, despite the Medical Research Council's recent encouraging assurance that sewage does not necessarily endanger swimmers.



"SEA-BATHING DOESN'T SUIT EVERYBODY." *Medical Opinion.*

August 6, 1913

found this out, but it may well be so. Far too many people on meeting a rattlesnake are deceived by its bright look of interest, which gives them the idea that they have found the perfect audience for that long story of theirs about the two Irishmen who were walking up Broadway. A story of that kind can be told properly only by constantly prodding the party of the second part in the ribs, and as rattlesnakes' ribs are extremely sensitive, one can readily see how quickly ennui would set in. My own view of rattlesnakes, one shared by many others, is that I can take them or leave them alone. They may want love from me, but I prefer a distant civility.

Well, sir, about that business up Rosendale, N.Y., way. It seems that a horse belonging to Kenneth Muller, a farmer of those parts, recently went to reside with the morning stars, and Mr. Muller naturally felt that the decent thing to do was to inter the remains. So he dug a hole, buried the dumb chum, and the following things happened:

Newswires from New York City to

Toronto were blacked out for an hour and forty-five minutes.

Thirty-eight Western Union lines between New York City and Albany, as well as television circuits, stopped operating.

A hundred and twenty channels of the American Telegraph and Telephone Company ceased to function, including eight coaxial cables.

It appears that in his digging Mr. Muller had sliced through a major underground cable carrying direct wire communications between New York and Albany. From sources close to Mr. Muller we learn that officials of the American Telegraph and Telephone Company are always popping in on him these days, and it is pathetic to see the anxious look on their faces as they ask him how his horses are doing. All well, they hope. Keeping pretty fit, they trust. No night sweats, retchings or nausea? Capital, capital!

Albert Blicharz of Detroit, Michigan, had rather an unpleasant homecoming the other night. He was driving into the garage behind his house, thinking of nothing but the kisses he would be

receiving shortly from his wife and the tots and of the pot roast which he knew was cooking in the oven, when he suddenly had a sneezing fit, in the course of which he crashed through the back of the garage, crossed an alley, ripped through a fence, glanced off a tree, knocked over a children's swing and slammed against the rear of a neighbour's house. The police, to whom he confided his story and expressed regret, agreed with him that the thing to do on these occasions is to keep muddling through, if possible with a stiff upper lip. They hoped his sneezing was better, and he said Oh, yes, much better.

America is the land of speed, but even there you will find an occasional citizen who likes to take his or her time. A case that springs to the mind is that of Mrs. Carmelo Gurecio of Pittsburgh, Pa., who on January 11, 1917 filed suit for divorce from Mr. Gurecio, accusing him, no doubt, of inhuman mental cruelty for making her have to memorize a name like that. She took no further steps till last week, when her divorce was granted.

She told Judge Clarence B. Nixon that she had not heard from her husband since she signed the petition. With him gone, she explained, she just forgot about the whole thing. Sort of slipped her mind, she said.

Renunciation

NO more the slave of shank and slice,
Of flapping wrists, of arms that bend,

The compound of all golfing vice, ...
I quit. This is the end.

Now more shall every muscle tense
In terror as I face the pond.
Now only my æsthetic sense
Will mark the rough beyond,

The pathway to the distant tee,
The ditch, the gorse, the ancient yew;
From past irrelevancies free,
I shall admire the view.

So shall we go our diverse ways,
The game and I, to meet no more.
(And is it but a mere *three days*
Since I said that before?)

ERIC WALMSLEY

Snow, Science, and the Festive Mood

By PETER DICKINSON

The Royal Society is about to celebrate its tercentenary

ABOUT a year ago Sir Charles Snow declared that it was as shameful for a layman not to know the Second Law of Thermodynamics as for a scientist not to know who wrote *Paradise Lost*. If you happen to know the Second Law you had better go and mix yourself a drink while the rest of us catch up, for Sir Charles's remark was a good deal subtler than it appears.

It is no use ringing up a scientist and asking him. I tried this, and my scientist* rummaged about in his mind while the pips went by and eventually said "Well, roughly, in terms that a layman can understand, it says that you can't get something for nothing." This is a typical scientist's remark. It is also, I later discovered, the First Law of Thermodynamics.

Dissatisfied and distrustful, I went next day to a library and consulted half a dozen elementary text-books. One disagreed with Sir Charles to the extent of omitting the Second Law of Thermodynamics, but from the remaining five I was able to derive or deduce the following information:

The Second Law of Thermodynamics is important.

It is perfectly simple, obvious even.

The gist of it is that work has to be done to transfer heat from a colder to a hotter body.

After a hundred and twenty years of knowing this, the scientists have not yet hit on an accepted form of words for saying it. (All five books put it differently; three were simple, though one started with a hanging participle; two were incomprehensible, but still quite different.)

Readers who felt sufficiently *au fait* with the Second Law may care to rejoin us for the First Law. My scientist had this about right, though he might have added "as far as heat and energy are concerned." There was no agreement among my textbooks

about how to put this, either, and at one point there was a perturbing confusion of thought; textbook A mentioned that the First Law made it impossible to build a perpetual motion machine; and textbook B (not one of these here-to-day-gone-to-morrow jobs, but a good solid chunk of physics on which the next generation of our rulers is even now whetting its teeth) *proved* the First Law by saying that otherwise it would be possible to build a perpetual motion machine "which is absurd."

There is no Third Law of Thermodynamics. Which means that 100 per cent—an overwhelming proportion—of the Laws of Thermodynamics lack both classic proof and classic formulation.

The Royal Society, our august academy of sciences, is about to celebrate its tercentenary, from which

it is easy to deduce that they have had three hundred years to deal with this problem. Easy but misleading, for the Laws of Thermodynamics were only agreed to exist, in however nebulous a state, in the middle of the last century. Even so, a hundred and twenty years should have given them time.

And this is only an aspect of a larger and more disastrous defect which they have had their full three centuries to remedy. Consider (while you are wondering how much champagne to order, what fireworks to lay on, whether to hire a brass band—after all a tercentenary is a tercentenary) this:

"By contrast there is another type of central inhibition (presynaptic inhibition), where excitatory presynaptic impulses are rendered less powerful synaptic excitants. It is effected by the depolarization which Group I



"It sure is a lovely recording—who's on stock-whip?"

*He keeps a little runabout lab. at his house and a big high-powered job at his university, so Mr. Vance Packard could probably give us his status to a T.

muscle afferent volleys produce in the muscle afferent fibres monosynaptically exciting motoneurons."

This is part of the summary of the Ferrier Lecture, which was given to the Royal Society by Sir John Eccles, F.R.S., last month. It is a typical piece of scientific English, with verbs in the passive, relative clauses rambling loosely on, and the odd participle floating about as if uncertain which noun to clutch at. It reads like thick porridge, and suggests that those who write it think like thick porridge at least some of the time.

And the Royal Society is responsible not only for listening to this sort of

language indulgently* but for starting it all off. They paid a lot of attention to the use of language when they started, so much so that they wouldn't elect old Sir Thomas Browne, only a moderate scientist despite his proof that dying swans don't sing. They let in busy, curious gossip Aubrey and dull Mr. Evelyn, but Browne wrote too well.

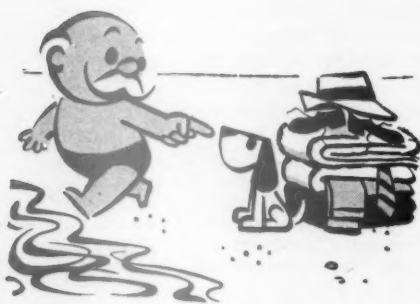
They'll tell you that the nature of the scientific method dictates the language they use. Of course they need a rather large special vocabulary, but it need never have been chosen with quite such a haphazard disregard for the word they might be wanting next. The Royal Society has had three hundred years to exercise some control, insist on some coherent method, in the choice of new words, and it hasn't started yet. Getting scientists to put the words, once chosen, together properly, is not a matter of control but of example, and they've had three hundred years to make a start on that, too.

The odd thing is that scientists do admire what they call "elegance." "A most elegant experiment," you will hear them saying in exactly the tones of someone praising a fine minor claret. Yet on the laboratory bench this experiment will consist of some rather

dangerous wiring, a few bits and bobs of old galvanometers, a brass canister and a vacuum pump sucking away nastily in the corner. Their attitude to language is the same. They long to prove that the whole universe is governed by a series of exquisitely orderly variations on a single equation, and they try to do it by treating words as things that can be stuck together with a soldering iron. And all the time specialization is becoming more fecund and schismatic, while every specialist is inventing and distorting language until only his fellows in the field can understand it. Soon they will be talking to themselves alone.

Luckily there is no need to celebrate the tercentenary of the Royal Society this year; with a typically messy approach to aesthetic matters, the Society provides three separate dates on which it would be reasonable to celebrate its tercentenary. 1945 is no longer any use, but by waiting till 1962 we could give them a little more time to prove that they are doing more good than harm. They cannot dissipate the miasma of centuries in a couple of years, but they can at last show willing. If, by then, they have managed to find a definite form of words for the Laws of Thermodynamics, and have elected Sir Thomas Browne a posthumous member, I shall lay on champagne and fireworks. The brass bands can wait until they have learnt the use of the active voice.

*Let us, for a moment, be fair. Perhaps Sir John Eccles speaks lucidly and largely in the active. Many scientists do. It is the nameless voice of science that always descends to this repugnant murk.



ROY DAVIS

Wish You Were Here

Venice

CITY still as improbable as sea-horses, as addict-forming as ballet or *petits-fours*, as enchanting as a memory of summer in childhood. The shop windows have pathetic notices trying to convince the English-speaking visitor that the prices mean what they say and all those stories about haggling are just a legend. At night in the Piazza San Marco, girl infants caracole about with explosive chirrup of utter delight while the orchestra plays the *New World*. The best anti-bant I found was a slab of smooth chocolate ice in a large glass of whipped cream. A salesman in a

Murano glass-factory tried to sell me eight instead of six glasses by arguing that if I broke two I should then be left with a convenient half-dozen, but if I bought six and broke two I should be stumped "when five people sat down to dinner." A portraitist tried to get my custom as I sat outside Florian's by calling my appearance "*formidabile e fantastica*." So far I have seen a woman trying to muzzle an alsatian with one hand while eating an ice cream cornet with the other, a gondola full of beehives and a man fishing from a hearse.

— R. G. G. P.

In the City



Six-per-cent Squeeze

THE Stock Exchange has shrugged off the triple dose of credit restrictions with a fair degree of unconcern. The rise of Bank Rate to 6 per cent surprised only in its timing. This, it was widely thought, was a move that might be deferred until the autumn brought its customary onslaught on sterling. By making it now, that autumn pressure may be avoided and the odds in favour of this happening are strengthened by the fact that while interest rates are going up here they are falling in the United States. A stream of hot money from the New World may yet help, for a time at least, to restore the balance of the Old.

A six-per-cent Bank Rate had been discounted in the gilt-edged market; but what had not been allowed for was the second prong of the credit trident, namely the doubling of the "special deposits" which the clearing and Scottish banks are called upon to hold with the Bank of England. In order to muster the additional £70 million or so involved the banks may be forced to sell more investments. This, it should be added, is not the intention of the "special deposit" exercise. The aim is to induce the banks to curtail loans and overdrafts. That they are beginning to do. But overdrawn customers seem to be more resistant to the bludgeoning of their bank managers than had been expected. It is, therefore, possible that the line of least resistance may yet be found in further sales of gilt-edged securities. Hence the further demoralization of this market.

The third tooth with which the Chancellor has bitten is a false one and probably put in for the sake of appearances and of appeasement in the City: it is his promise to hold next year's capital expenditure of the Government, central and local, and nationalized industries, at this year's level. Let us count those chickens when they hatch.

The promises of cuts in Government expenditure, whether above or below the line, have been made and broken so often that an attitude of healthy scepticism is justified.

Even allowing for some doubt on this third item, the combined operation involving what is a relatively high level of interest rates and further restrictions of bank credit must in due course provide a considerable sedative to the economy. The immediate reaction of markets was to put everything down, but while gilts have stayed down, industrial equities, after a short period of hesitation, have tended to recover.

In the search for companies which are likely to ride the dear money winds with a fair measure of success, let two highly contrasted concerns be mentioned. They are Trust Houses and Bovis Holdings.

In this holiday season Trust Houses need no introduction to the travelling investor. They own a chain of admirably run hotels, which last year accommodated 2,252,218 "sleepers" (a sleeper

is one person spending one night) and served more than 8½ million meals (not counting afternoon teas). The business is expanding. It is opening a new hotel in Swansea and proposing to build two in London and probably one other at Winchester. The company is administered as well as its hotels are run, and an investment in its shares will bring an immediate return of just on 4 per cent with a fairly confident promise of growth over the years ahead.

At the other end of the industrial spectrum lies Bovis Holdings Ltd., now to be known as the B.H. Group, which controls a number of enterprises in the building and civil engineering industry. This admittedly is an industry which is liable to be affected by restriction on credit and other controls; but the latest reports from this firm suggest that there is a satisfactory volume of work in hand and that the recent growth in profits (the net figure after taxation last year rose from £96,000 to £130,000) holds the promise of still better things to come.

— LOMBARD LANE

* * *

In the Country



Home Brewed

A VERY bored village policeman told me the other day that if it weren't for the motorists he would probably be unemployed. There has been so much comment about juvenile delinquency and crime waves that nobody has observed just how law-abiding we've become. It is fair to say that as much as ninety per cent of criminal offences are committed in the towns—or on the roads. My policeman informed me that in a whole year he had had only two cases of drunkenness—both visitors; three cases of petty theft and one attempted suicide. "Times are not what they were," he said. "In the old days smuggling, wrecking, sheep-stealing and coining enlivened the bobby's round. Not to mention the local industry," he added. "In those days there was hardly a cottage hereabouts which wasn't an illegal brewery."

"How did they make their beer?" I asked with anything but idle curiosity.

"They used to make what we'd call stout," he said. "Not in large quantities, you know, just enough for a man and his family."

"Which is how much?"

"About a gallon a day. They used to wet a sack of barley, spread it on a barn floor to sprout and then keep it turned to make their malt. They used to gather their hops wild or buy them."

"Can't you remember the recipe exactly?"

"Sure—we, I mean they, used to soak a couple of bucketfuls of malt in a copper full of water, boil it with hops and a touch of liquorice to give the beer its colour and taste; and then, when it had boiled for an hour, they would add some sugar and a dab of yeast."

"Is that all there was to it?"

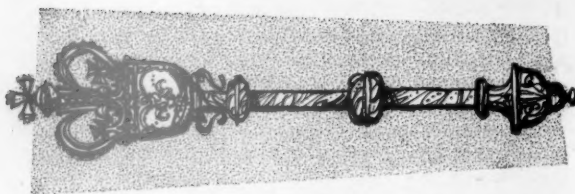
"Apart from letting the beer cool, skimming the top and bottling it for a week while it fermented. It was strong stuff, cost only ½d. a pint. It's strange they don't go in for it nowadays now that beer's so expensive. I can't understand what's holding them back."

The bobby left to pounce on a motorist who'd parked his car near a traffic light. I scuttled off to the nearest corn-chandler.

His recipe was accurate, the beer cost me ½d. a pint—not counting the cost of the licence. And of course one should count the cost of the licence.

— RONALD DUNCAN

Essence



of Parliament

THE debate on the denationalization of Richard Thomas and Baldwin came in with a bang and went out with a whimper. In its early speeches there was a wealth of historic examples of robbery to which the Government's action was compared. Mr. Frank Lee plumped both for Dick Turpin and the destruction of the monasteries. Mr. John Morris preferred the freebooters of the Spanish Main. When Mr. Wood, by nature the most conciliatory of Ministers, tried to justify the Government's action he was submitted to an almost continuous catcall. Mr. George Brown and Mr. Callaghan on the Front Opposition bench kept up an unbreaking stream of interruption, though whether it was their joint object to shout down the Minister or the object of each to shout down the other, who shall say? Leaders of the Labour Party have before now been selected by even more curious ordeals by battle, and he who shouts loudest, they may have felt, shouts last. Then there was a stormy exchange between Mr. Cyril Osborne and Mr. Manuel on what forms of insult were proper for a Methodist to employ. But whatever the merits of the Government's action, Dr. Hill's point that the Opposition had chosen to make a special fuss of it because here was at last something on which they could agree was so manifestly true that by the end they had relapsed through exhaustion into almost silence, as those who wanted to nationalize more and those who don't want to nationalize more at least agreed in being opposed to denationalization. It is indeed a feat for the Opposition to agree on anything, but while indignation bubbled one wondered what proportion of the electorate knew to-day whether Richard Thomas and Baldwin was nationalized or denationalized or could tell the difference between the Socialist plan of control through nationalization and the Conservative plan of control without it.

That was Monday. On Tuesday they were at the same sort of point in their attack on the Government for selling to English and American capitalists the Admiralty firm of S. G.

The Lowing Herd

Brown & Co. But it is asking a bit too much even of Parliamentary human nature to expect anyone to take Mr. Frank Lee as a prima donna two days running. The Socialists would certainly have done better to have put up someone else to open in the second innings. Not even a passionate concern for the fate of S. G. Brown & Co. could keep Members from the cafeteria. They clambered out over one another.

*The lowing herd wound quickly o'er the Lee
And left the House to seek a cup of tea,*

and Mr. Lee was left orating to almost totally deserted benches. "Why do the Tories hate the British people so much?" pathetically asked Mr. Lee, but with the peculiar acoustics of the Chamber there was not even Echo left to answer "Why?"

and only one cynical Tory to reflect that if electoral returns be any test the British people may hate the Tories quite a lot, but they apparently hate the Socialists even more.

The Lords had their fun and games about foreign affairs on Wednesday. Lord Attlee was in caustic form. Mr. Khrushchev, he thought, was now secure in his leadership of the non-Communist world. He could not feel quite so certain of his leadership of the Communist world. Lord Strang said that we could not join the Six unless we were prepared to accept political integration. If not, we must be content with half-way houses. Lord Boothby robustly intervened to say that we must either go in or stay out. We would not be allowed to go on dithering. The strangest speech came from Lord Home on behalf of the Government. He preached the old doctrine of defence against aggression and was apparently under the impression that under this Government we were at the present moment adequately defended. "There must be no chink or crack in our defence shield," he asserted. The absurd mediæval metaphor, the glaring facts, the nonsense of the argument gave it a good claim to the silliest sentence of all time. It was left to Mr. Paget to make the crack of the week on the Government's foreign policy in the Commons on Thursday. Mr. Butler hummed and hawed about promising a debate on the Government's attitude towards Europe. It depended, he said, "on the evolution of policy." Mr. Paget asked whether this evolution was "a purely fortuitous event without application of human intelligence."

It is safe to assume, unless there is definite evidence to the contrary, that all actions by Mr. Butler are mildly malicious. There has been a lot of talk about the wickedness of Whips

Wolfenden to Bed

and the excesses of party discipline, and it was with a quick chuckle that Mr. Butler was able to announce some days ago that there would be a free vote on Mr. Kenneth Robinson's Wolfenden motion, as indeed there almost always is on private Members' motions. No Member who speaks for reform can be quite sure that he will not arouse some enraged constituent who for months to come will proceed to make his life a misery; Mr. Kenneth Robinson was therefore a brave man to raise the topic, and he raised it in an exceptionally moderate and reasonable speech—moderate and reasonable even for him, who is the most moderate and reasonable of men. The general view of the House seemed to be that the present law is idiotic but on no account to be changed. Mr. Butler—and one could quite see his point of view—clearly did not think much of the law but was anxious not to be saddled, as he was over capital punishment, with a half-responsibility for giving facilities for a bill which most of his own supporters did not like. He therefore characteristically offered the reformers, as Mr. Greenwood very fairly put it, "everything except help." It is hard on its intrinsic merits to see much force in the Deedes-Butler argument that there ought to be reform but not quite yet. Mr. Jenkins's point that purposeless delay will make the situation worse and more difficult seemed unanswerable. But at least surely one thing ought to emerge from the debate. Mr. Deedes confessed that he had reached the conclusion that imprisonment was not fit punishment for these offences. It is obviously indeed an insane punishment to shut up a young homosexual in an all-male establishment in the company of persons who are by definition of loose morals and deficient in self-control. The deterrence, if deterrence there is, is in conviction. Go on bringing the charges if you must, but drop the punishment of imprisonment. No one surely could be against that. If we must resign ourselves to it that the Law is a Hass there is no reason why it should be a Maniac.

—PERCY SOMERSET

The Cup and the Lip

By GERALDINE BUSSEY

ON my first day at *The Clarion*, in a small snowbound Canadian town, the editor, Mr. Bigley, a sad-faced man decorated with a green eyeshade, showed me around the premises. Once a cheese factory, the building was all on the flat; but to make up for this there were, the sports editor assured me, ups and downs that would scare the pants off Nero.

This sports editor, having delicately put me at my ease with the welcome "Hi, Babe," at once turned to Mr. Bigley and asked eagerly "You told her about Mrs. Prout yet?"

"Okay, Joe, okay, *okay*," said Mr. Bigley, frowning.

Later I asked Joe who Mrs. Prout was.

"Hell on wheels," he replied sincerely.

Mrs. Prout was a prominent citizen in every sense, being built on the lines of a pigeon wearing a life-jacket. She had a meringue-mound of white hair, yellow eyes often glazed with goat-like obstinacy, and one of the smallest mouths ever seen in the Province of Quebec.

Mrs. Prout was fiercely particular about the handling of her news, and as she had her finger in nearly every one of those local sisterhoods, sororities, societies, groups, committees, circles, inner circles, leagues, chapters, guilds,

auxiliaries and just plain clubs to which the North American female is so partial, she was frequently able to get annoyed with us for three separate reasons in the same edition. Her husband owned one half of *The Clarion*, her brother owned the other half, and Mr. Bigley, unfortunate editorial football, owned not even his soul.

"I won't do it, I won't do it—professional integrity—I'm resigning, that's flat!" moaned Mr. Bigley every few days, drumming with his fists on one of Mrs. Prout's contributions.

"Oh, go on, Bigley, put it in, keep the old tomato sweet," urged Joe tolerantly. It was all right for him to



"Pardon me, but do you happen to cover this locality?"

talk; Mrs. Prout could hardly stand over him and make him add "tastefully arranged," or "refined," to his ice-hockey write-ups; nor could she blister him by telephone for leaving out a whole paragraph of charity bridge-party "subscribers" (sent in closely handwritten on both sides of mauve paper, and objected to with picturesque profanity by the French-Canadian linotype operator).

What seemed to upset Mr. Bigley most was the matter of the awards. Mrs. Prout had endowed so many of these things that they were always cropping up in the news: the Mildred Prout Scholarships, the Prout Prize for Pastry, the Prout Medals for temperance, oratory and kindness to birds; for Improvement in This and Outstanding That; and, king of them all, the Prout Cup for Cultural Contribution to the Community, a huge uncultural object standing three feet high with handles sticking out like a pair of silver-gilt ears.

Every time a prize was presented there was Mrs. Prout doing it on our front page, shoving the thing sideways across her chest at the recipient, and smiling straight out of the picture.

"Oh, brother!" Mr. Bigley would groan. He had, of course, attended the function and written it up, obediently incorporating—after the usual audible struggles with his integrity—Mrs. Prout's own version (always posted to him before the event).

"Mrs. Prout, prominent local club-woman, well-known for her generous interest in community affairs," Mr. Bigley would read out, with tears in his eyes. All Mrs. Prout's prizewinners were brilliant, gifted, heroic, cultured or well-loved.

"Well-loved!" bleated Mr. Bigley, flinging *The Clarion* on the floor, outraged at his own compliance.

Every Thursday Mr. Bigley had to put on his best suit and, notebook in hand, become a reluctant guest at the Community Luncheon Club, a local mutual admiration society, where there was an abundance of stuffed olives and stuffed speakers. He was never happy on any Thursday; but on the last one in February, when Mrs. Prout always presented the cup for Cultural Contribution to the Community, death looked sweet to him.

Mrs. Prout telephoned him days beforehand to remind him about the

presentation. To make doubly sure that he would cover it she also wrote "Don't forget a photographer," and "Don't forget, Mr. Bigley, I am relying on you too."

When Culture Thursday came, Mr. Bigley looked crushed all morning. He had his best suit on, but we had to stop him as he was going out into the snow wearing his overcoat and his eyeshade. He thanked us sadly and corrected his headgear.

The office telephone rang while we were eating our sandwiches. Mrs. Prout's well-known hoot was heard.

"But Mr. Bigley left for the luncheon ages ago, Mrs. Prout," I assured her.

"Don't tell me Bigley's kicking loose at last!" said Joe.

"I hope he's all right," I said anxiously, after Mrs. Prout had hooted three more times at intervals of fifteen minutes. "Didn't you think he looked very depressed?"

The afternoon wore on. It was getting dark before Mr. Bigley came back.

He crossed the office with swaying dignity, and sat down at his desk, wearing his hat and coat. He carefully put his eyeshade on over his hat.

"Who won the cup?" I asked.

"Jack the Ripper, for all I know," replied Mr. Bigley, doing deep-breathing exercises.

"Mrs. Prout rang up four times," I told him. "She kept asking where you were."

"And she'll never know!" crowed Mr. Bigley, with a triumphant hiccup.

He was lying fast asleep across his desk when the afternoon post came, and in it, one of those pre-presentation write-ups of Mrs. Prout's, all about the richly-deserved honour bestowed at the Community Luncheon Club, when Mrs. Prout, prominent citizen, presented the Prout Cup for Cultural Contribution to the Community to our gifted, trustworthy, well-loved editor, Mr. Ron Bigley.

☆

"If you had been O'Hara, eating a lonely meal in Fagnani's little restaurant, and a girl staggered through the door with a knife in her back, you would no doubt have done as O'Hara and sworn over her dead body to get her killer."

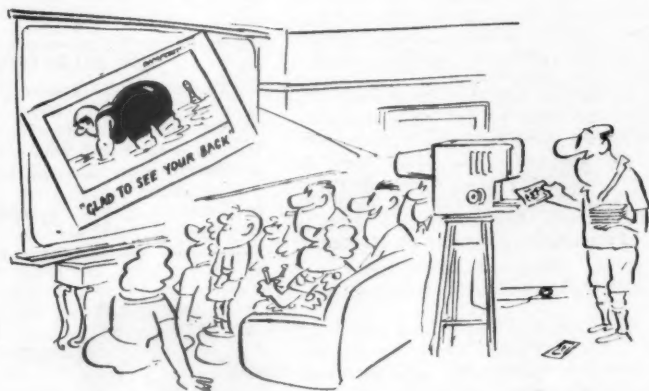
Blurb from "Mortgage for Murder," by Paul Costello

Or changed your restaurant.

Man in Rooms

by Larry







criticism



Smiley

AT THE PLAY

Improvisations or The Shepherd's Chameleon (ARTS)
Victims of Duty (ARTS)
Oliver! (NEW)

IS Ionesco's growing popularity significant of a definite change in public taste? I shall believe this when I see a play of his filling a West End commercial theatre without a big star in its cast. The number of people who like him for himself is certainly widening, but it has a long way to go before it becomes a movement. And much the same is true in Paris. Since the dawn of time, it seems, the same Ionesco programme has been filling the Huchette, which holds a dedicated audience of ninety-seven, but last year *Tueur Sans Gages*, his first full-length piece, failed in spite of good acting by a non-star company, and it took the magnetism of Barrault's name to do for *Rhinoceros* what Sir Laurence Olivier is doing for it in London.

The two one-act plays now at the Arts are seven or eight years old and by no means his best work. *Improvisations* or *The Shepherd's Chameleon* is a rag of the more pedantic sort of dramatic critic (a breed apparently encouraged by the climate

of Paris) who would reduce all play-writing to a scientific formula, and is prepared to engage in endless and futile metaphysical argument. Of this piece Ionesco himself is the hero. Asleep in his study over his latest play, he is disturbed by three leading critics who want to brainwash him and pump him full of their absurd ideas, Brechtian and otherwise. At the last moment, as they are succeeding, he is rescued by his charwoman, a resolutely sensible creature with a broom, who sends the angry sages packing, so that Ionesco can go happily back to his desk. I believe some of his quotations at the end, which sound like the sieved ravings of Bedlam, are actually taken from writings of contemporary French critics. This certainly puts an edge on the

proceedings for those who know, but it is rather an esoteric joke, and the play is not nearly so witty as some by this author.

Victims of Duty is a very muddled fantasy. It begins in a room furnished for a nightmare where a man and his wife are sitting. Their talk turning to drama, the husband declares there is only one plot in the world, the detective searching for something, and at that moment the door-bell rings; enter a Chief Inspector, who is looking for a man named Mallot and proceeds to bully his agonized host into going on a tortuous subconscious journey that takes him to the nethermost depths and also up to the heights. For a short time the detective becomes the man's father; this is the kind of drastic change that presents no difficulties to Ionesco's extremely subtle technique; if the aim of the play is to demonstrate how wildly one can get away from conventional drama, then it is successfully made, but not with the point and wit one associates with Ionesco. Whenever he gets near to saying something worthwhile, he shies away, and though life may be like that, it makes a frustrating entertainment. As the little man whipped down surrealistic corridors back to his infancy Toke Townley is touching, and Betty Huntley-Wright as his wife and Richard Briers as the detective are both good. The translations by Donald Watson seem admirable.

REP. SELECTION

Theatre Royal, Windsor, *A Clean Kill*, until July 16th.
 Playhouse, Salisbury, *The Edwardians*, until July 9th.
 Theatre Royal, Lincoln, *Our Town*, until July 9th.
 Colchester Rep., *Spanish Siesta*, until July 9th.



Oliver Twist—KEITH HAMSHIRE

Fagin—RON MOODY

[Oliver!]

If the rigours of the end are understandably softened—to execute Ron Moody's Fagin would be unthinkable—it is the tough side of Dickens rather than the sentimental that Lionel Bart brings out in *Oliver!*, his successful adaptation of *Oliver Twist*. Fagin slips away, and could well look after himself, but Bill Sikes is shot on Waterloo Bridge in one of the most exciting scenes I remembered in a musical—exciting not so much because of the man-hunt, but because Sean Kenny's set of massive timbers, John Wyckham's lighting that marvellously suggests the river by night (as elsewhere he hits off, for a pub scene, the exact quality of Hogarth's light) and Peter Coe's stirring handling of a London crowd marry into one of those rare and complete illusions.

Mr. Bart is a one-man band that will not be asked, I think, to move into the next street. He has written the book, fairly to Dickens, the music, much of which seems catchy, and a set of lyrics well above the average. A lot of characters disappear, but they will not be missed except by fanatical Dickensians. It is a pity the Oliver hasn't a better voice, but in every other respect

Keith Hamshire is just what is wanted; the Artful Dodger is engagingly played by Martin Horsey, and the chorus of infant crooks is perfectly cast. It is noticeable that even in repose they go on acting.

The outstanding figures here are Mr. Moody's Fagin, a monstrous lip-licking creature reminiscent of Hermione Gingold at her most abandoned, that plays cabaret tricks with his voice and is obviously the terror and idol of the boys. Too nice a Fagin? Much funnier, anyway. And Georgia Brown's Nancy, the eighteen-carat girl in thrall to a brute; she can sing, and she flings herself warmly into the part. And Danny Sewell's alarming Sikes, a bully who shakes the house in his rage and leaves it far more comfortable once he is shot.

This all-English musical dares to be original in its clever use of small boys and its exclusion of the usual dreadful songs about "lurve." There is hardly any sugar in it, apart from the occasional pathos of Oliver and the hopeless soft-heartedness of Mr. Brownlow, that fount of fivers and loving-kindness. There is only Nancy's love for Sikes, which is a raw product, and that of Bumble for Mrs. Corney, which is soon expended.

Oliver! made more mark on me than any musical I have seen for some time. Mr. Bart and Mr. Coe have every reason to be pleased with themselves.

Recommended

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

Ross (Haymarket—18/5/60), Rattigan on T. E. Lawrence, with Alec Guinness. *A Passage to India* (Comedy—27/4/60), E. M. Forster's novel very well staged. *Roots* (Royal Court—12/8/59), Arnold Wesker's best play.

—ERIC KEOWN

AT THE PICTURES

Sons and Lovers

The Savage Innocents

NEVER, to my shame, having read *Sons and Lovers*, I enjoyed the film (Director: Jack Cardiff) a good deal more than I expected. Most of the others seem to have had preconceptions about what a Lawrence novel ought to be like on film. I only thought I wouldn't like it, and I was wrong.

Not that it's a great, or even a successful film. Too often words are allowed to do a lot of preaching that would be tolerable only if done by camera and action alone. And the level of believability varies desperately; the episodes with Miriam up at the farm have a touch of obscene prettiness, as if Sir James Barrie had written a sex play; in a different way, the pit accident is rather perfunctorily handled—it can't be as easy as that to push through a crowd, and they take a mortal time getting poor dead Arthur off the lift when there are still injured men below. All this, by the way, is beautifully photographed in black and white on a very wide screen.

On the other hand the episode in Nottingham with Clara (played by Mary Ure) is alive and full of a sense of sudden freedom. The happy reality of this part is

the film's greatest success, helped along by a very natural performance by Elizabeth Begley as Clara's mother. Wendy Hiller brings all her tremendous charm and dash to the part of Mrs. Morel, and only occasionally makes one wonder whether it is the right charm. And Dean Stockwell is perfectly all right as Paul Morel—devilish attractive, in fact—provided you haven't gone to the cinema to see the portrayal of a young sun-god.

The Savage Innocents (Director: Nicholas Ray) has an American playing the part of the hero, a Japanese the heroine; it was made in the Arctic and Ealing, with some Roman firm mysteriously intervening; it is about Eskimos and (apart from some very jolly photography of icebergs and walrus on a huge screen covered with colour) it is a repulsive charade, summing up in nearly two hours the worst of popular anthropology, of "enlightenment" about primitive people, of the myth of the noble savage, and of pidgin English. I won't catalogue my grievances but just give one instance; Eskimo women are not, usually, attractive to Western eyes, so the heroine is played by a pretty Japanese girl dressed in the most fetching clothes that could, conceivably, be worn by an Eskimo. It is fair to say that if you can take this sort of thing you will find yourself laughing quite often during the first half.

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

Wild River is a glossy magazine film about the Tennessee Valley Authority, mainly concerned with a young administrator's trouble in getting an obstinate old woman (Jo Van Fleet) off an island that is about to be flooded; a slow, silly love story is interwoven with this. But at times, for instance when dealing with a gently reasonable segregationist spokesman, *Wild River* suggests what a good film could have been made about the TVA. It is released this week.

None of the other releases was reviewed here. *A Generation* (22/6/60) and *Edward and Caroline* (26/9/51) are on together at the Academy; and both the films about Orpheus are worth seeing.

—PETER DICKINSON

ON THE AIR

Uncertain Party

THE first helping of Granada's new series, "Two's a Crowd," was far from impressive. There is a feeling of unease here, where evidently the effect aimed at was a cosy matinee. Marion Ryan is bright enough, and can sing pop songs as well as they deserve to be sung: but a special quality is needed to hold together a show of this kind, in which a lady singer acts as a kind of nice aunty having a bit of a party with a couple of ever-so-amusing but respectable gentlemen friends, and Miss Ryan hasn't yet shown that her personality is big enough, or unique enough, to do the trick successfully. The rapport between Miss Ryan and Orson Bean, the American comedian, was shaky. I would



[Sons and Lovers]

Paul Morel and His Madonna—
DEAN STOCKWELL and WENDY HILLER

guess that Bean is in any case a lone-wolf entertainer whose effectiveness as an eccentric social commentator is bound to be weakened by the introduction of jolly pals into his act. In this opening show some of his material was weak, and even the best of it (which was extremely funny, presented in a wry, unemphatic style) went fluttering insubstantially over the heads of the studio audience, who seemed to be waiting as patiently as ever for somebody's trousers to fall down. Gary Marshal sang pleasantly, and the Granadiers were well up to form: but the whole effect was disappointingly flat. I look forward to seeing Mr. Bean work in more appropriate surroundings, and I hope that Miss Ryan, as her experience grows, will learn to cope less self-consciously with "spontaneous" linking material.

"Twenty Questions," always a popular diversion on radio, has now been added to the list of television panel games (A-R), with Stewart MacPherson in charge. His technique seems effortless, and he manages to convey the feeling that although this is just a bit of lively nonsense we may as well keep the rule vaguely in mind and not succumb to giggles. He is humorous but polite, at once alert and relaxed, so quick-



"Not another D-U-C-K?"

thinking that the game proceeds at a gallop. He also gives the impression that he is genuinely enjoying himself—as indeed he almost certainly is. The Mystery Voice, for the visual medium, has been given a body, belonging to one of those pretty girls who are television's maids-of-all-work: they may be seen nightly, anonymous or briefly identified—handing out prizes, moving quiz contestants about, or acting as stooges for comics. I didn't catch Miss Mystery Voice's name the last time I watched, but she looked a shade frightened to me, and must have caused confusion in many a home by announcing one Next Object as "A Grass Window . . . a Grass Window," while the caption plainly showed "Grass Widow." (It was probably nothing to the confusion caused by Peter O'Sullivan, who informed us, just before his commentary on the Greyhound Derby (BBC), that this race was won several times in the past by Golden Miller.) Still, she enunciated each object as seductively as possible, and is no doubt amassing fan-mail. The members of the panel were all quite adroit at the game, and nicely mixed: Isobel Barnett gracious and unfurried, Muriel Young excitably intuitive, Stephen Potter appropriately solemn as a humorist, and Frankie Howerd pulling some splendid Thinking Faces. What a strange form of entertainment this is, yet how compelling!

I have examined "Tempo '60" (BBC) more closely, as threatened, and I regret to say I still cannot regard Frank Berry as an altogether satisfactory compère. There is something rushed and boyish in his work: he lacks repose: his old jokes are as far beyond criticism as the cuneiform writings of the Hittites: his new jokes, often potentially hilarious, suffer from a nervous brashness in the telling. The show itself is photographed excitingly, and the Tubby Hayes Combo turns out some of the best jazz available on the little screen.

The standard of BBC sports reporting is generally so high that it may seem ungrateful to complain about Raymond Baxter's commentary on the Le Mans International

24-Hour Sports Car Race. Ever a reluctant churl, I feel bound to say that his enthusiasm, his excitement and his encyclopedic knowledge of the world of Ferraris, Jags and Aston Martins all combined to make his breakneck résumés baffling to the uninitiated seeking enlightenment. As he strove to cram every last ounce of information into his sentences they went looping and curling about alarmingly—parenthesis within parenthesis within parenthesis, main verbs bogged down and forgotten in a conglomeration of afterthoughts, and the whole effect a shimmering, impressionistic jumble. I admit I found it thrilling, but I often wondered what the devil was really going on.

—HENRY TURTON

— HENRY TURTON

IN THE GROOVE

Plea for Eclecticism

WHEN Mr. Norman Granz, who is certainly the most prolific and probably the most influential of American jazz impresarios, was in London recently I asked him how he had become such a dominant figure in the two decades since, as a student of philosophy at the University of California at Los Angeles, he had organized his first night-club jam session.

He recalled his evangelical campaign, especially in the Southern states, to enable negro and white musicians to play together and to stay in the same first-class hotels, and he told of the exceptionally high wages he had offered to induce some of the best musicians to play Jazz At The Philharmonic on an apparently everlasting series of concert tours. But the jazz itself—how had he kept it fresh, season after season? On what theories had he based his daring decisions to bring together so many superficially dissimilar players and singers?

"Applied to jazz," Mr. Granz said, "aesthetic dogma is something I don't dig." In the sometimes pedantic controversies between the progressives and the mouldy figs, or traditionalists, he has always carefully steered a course straight through the

middle. "There's no use being doctrinaire about jazz," he said. "You just get the best guys you can get, and they blow, and often something good comes out."

Mr. Granz was possibly exaggerating the catholicity of his tastes and the simplicity of his standards; however, it is obviously true that British connoisseurs of jazz are inclined to be more deeply committed to their preferred factions, more rigidly academic, and more solemnly partisan than most of the Americans who are equally interested in the subject. Our domestic schisms were strikingly apparent at the Beaulieu Jazz Festival last summer, when players of music in the Dixieland manner and players of music in the manner of Birdland were applauded as though they had been rival teams of gladiators. I plead for eclecticism.

Jelly Roll Morton, Teddy Wilson and Thelonious Monk, for example, have all in their different styles earned the right to places in good, comprehensive collections; and, in my opinion, Ornette Coleman, the alto saxophonist, the farthest-out of the innovators in New York to-day, set a sensible example for all of us whose main instrument is the gramophone when he said "I just play what I hear and what makes sense."

The only sort of jazz that now seems beyond consideration is rock 'n' roll, an adulterated and degraded form that never amounted to much even before the Tin Pan Alley hill-billies took it over. Had there been any lingering doubts about it they would have been dispelled, as far as I'm concerned, by a recent issue of *Mesopotamia*, an admirable satirical magazine edited by Mr. T. P. Usborne at Balliol. A circular central portion of the magazine's cover, cut out, and spun at 33 r.p.m., gave forth "Mesopotamia Rock," a song whose lyric in its entirety consisted of the words of the title repeated again and again.

The midsummer crop of jazz records has been a lean one, but as long as Duke Ellington is leading an orchestra there won't be a famine. One of the most satisfying of the recent releases is his "Blues in Orbit (Philips BBL 7381). In spite of the excessive familiarity of "In a Mellow Tone" and "C Jam Blues," the record is recommended for some splendid Johnnie Hodges (alto saxophone) and Ray Nance (trumpet and violin) and for Harry Carney's weird bass clarinet in "Blues in Blueprint," which sounds as melancholy as Stan Kenton lost in a tropical swamp.

Other notable bits: Ray Charles singing "When Your Lover Has Gone" in "The Genius of Ray Charles" (London LTZ-K 15190); Trombones, Inc., the Chico Hamilton Quintet and others playing "The Cool Scene: Twelve New Ways to Fly" (Warner Brothers WM 4005); "Manhattan-Rico" in George Russell's "New York, N.Y." (Brunswick LAT 8333); and "Mort's Report" in "Manteca", by the Red Garland Trio with Ray Barreto (Esquire 32-096). Not all of it is altogether first class, but none of it is boring.

— PATRICK SKENE CATLING

BOOKING OFFICE

THE BOYS IN THE GUNROOM

By SIMON RAVEN

Young Sea Dogs. Commander Randolph Pears. *Putnam*, 25/-

SOMEWHERE between the ages of eight and fourteen one came aboard with the King's Letter and one's sea-chest and joined the other "Young Gentlemen" in the Gunroom. It was cramped, smelly and vermin-ridden; the food was unspeakable; one learnt very soon to swear most vilely; one's companions were often raucous bullies or seasoned drunks. In short, it was one of the most approved styles of education going, and even a royal prince did not disdain it. ("I am listed as Prince William of England; but my family name is Guelph, so you may call me William Guelph, if you please.") At first one was more or less of a cadet—put ruggedly to school to learn the most elementary of the endless mysteries of the sea. Later one became, perhaps, a cross between A.D.C. and body-servant to a senior officer. Later still one was given charge of one of the ship's boats—a real command, which could involve one in desperate minor actions and perils ranging from tidal waves to finding one's entire crew drunk two minutes before being required to ferry an admiral back to his flagship. If one came through all this in one piece, then (provided one had influence, money, or, just conceivably, merit) one could reasonably hope to be commissioned, in God's good time, as lieutenant. But there was always a substantial chance that circumstance or my Lords of the Admiralty would leave one just where one had always been—sitting in the Gunroom among a crowd of little boys, growing slowly older now (twenty, twenty-five, thirty . . .) without friends or prospects worth the name, without loyalty or hope to warm the heart.

A grim picture of the midshipman's lot? It is one that is confirmed by the earlier pages of Commander Randolph Pears's new book on the subject. Of course, things improved as time went on: promotion was ordered rather more justly; special training ships were introduced for the little boys, while the less suitable

of the bigger ones, once the nineteenth century was well under way, began to be quietly disposed of. But if you think I have exaggerated the horror of eighteenth and early nineteenth century goings on, then Pears's history of (for example) Mr. Midshipman Heywood of H.M.S. *Bounty* will prove highly instructive to you. Indeed, most of what Pears has to say is of interest—when not too heavily overlaid with hearty "naval" humour. For he has taken a number of (highly destined) midshipmen, spread over the last two hundred years, and has given very tolerable accounts of their careers while still in the Gunroom—accounts which are considerably enlivened by quotations (variously shrewd, naïve, touching and, occasionally, of genuine literary quality) from the young gentlemen's letters home. So that this book is a sort of midshipman's eye view of British Naval History: limited, certainly, but high-spirited, clear-sighted and often most happily frivolous.

But the trouble is that Commander

PRESENTING THE CRITICS



14—R. G. G. PRICE
Books, Punch

Pears has forborne to inquire very deeply into the private lives of the midshipmen concerned or into the true nature of off-duty life in the Gunroom. His tone can only be called "suitable." Thus there are occasional references to admiration for the blue-eyed daughters of some middle-class household ashore, or to jolly and destructive romps after dinner; but one can be pardoned if one apprehends that, things being what they were in the Gunroom, collective life there must have induced, over long periods, rather more curious habits and moral attitudes, an investigation of which would go far to explaining the subsequent oddities and inclinations—the subsequent greatness or infamy, for that matter—of important naval officers. True, Commander Pears emphasizes the physical squalor of the midshipman's situation—but only in order to show how triumphantly he rose above it. I suspect—indeed, from a little reading in the subject, I *know*—that there are other and more subtle forms of contamination (not necessarily sexual) which the midshipman never really threw off for the rest of his life. It is no good fobbing us off—however pleasantly—with cheery, gallant, almost identical little laddies in blue, all possessed of every Arnoldian virtue: the British midshipman was much more individual and interesting than that, and perhaps Commander Pears, if he can bear to jettison his bluff "public relations" approach, may feel inclined to expand on the matter in some future publication.

NEW NOVELS

Hawaii. James A. Michener. *Secker and Warburg*, 30/-
Watcher in the Shadows. Geoffrey Household. *Michael Joseph*, 15/-
Wilder Stone. John Leggett. *Hamish Hamilton*, 15/-

Hawaii has been producing the stock response among some reviewers that it is a stock stimulus, and such sneers as "Technicolored" "Best-seller packaging" and "Chocolate-coated" have flowed easily off the typewriter. But best-sellers—and this one has swept America—may be popular for a number of reasons and surely one of them is merit; there are middlebrow virtues as well as highbrow ones. *Hawaii* is over a thousand pages long and the pages have a lot of words on them; but in an historical novel with a vast span of time too much compression and cutting may lead merely to an impressionistic blur. You need length to convey duration.

Hawaii is readable, varied, passionately fair and original. It is a good shot at an

historical novel that is not limited to one epoch but tries to follow the history of an area. Indeed, Mr. Michener begins with some vivid popular geology. He then traces the fortunes of successive waves of invaders. First come the losers in a battle between old and new gods, making a tremendous voyage from an island near Tahiti. A thousand years later arrive missionaries from Boston. Some war relentlessly on native customs; some refuse to treat the natives as permanent inferiors; some move over into business. The descendants of the great missionary families rule the island as a tight commercial oligarchy; but the casual, happy Hawaiians cannot provide the intensive labour required for sugar and fruit plantations, and Mr. Michener devotes his next section to following the fortunes of two Chinese peasants who leave China and found a closely united family group, which in time rivals the great combination of white families in its control of the island's business life. The latest immigrants come from Japan and are fanatically patriotic, very hard working and highly intelligent.

With considerable ingenuity Mr. Michener provides contrasted episodes that both carry the story forward excitingly and illuminate aspects of the racial and cultural inter-relationships that fascinate him. His conclusion, that there are signs of the emergence of a balanced Pacific Man who unites the best in Oriental industry and respect for order, American democracy and Hawaiian sensitivity and charm, may be optimistic; but we get bullied too easily into the assumption that the optimistic is always the shallow. If it is very far from being a great novel, this straight look at the American Commonwealth through

American eyes is continuously interesting both in narrative and theme.

Watcher in the Shadows is another of Mr. Household's duels between hunter and hunted; but it is none the worse for being a variation on an old theme. A naturalized zoologist who has worked for British Intelligence during the war becomes aware that he has a mysterious adversary and tries to lure him into the open by deliberately exposing himself to the danger. Mr. Household shares Buchan's passion for the detail of landscape and also his vagueness on larger issues; but he also shares Buchan's ability to tell a story so fast you do not want to question it. I found this a very enjoyable yarn with a rather unconvincing ending, perhaps because Mr. Household is more interested in the view and the chase than in the kill.

Wilder Stone might well appeal to readers who had not previously met an American novel about the sad lot of a mother-smothered widower who loses contact with his only son, finds that at forty life is passing him by, worries about keeping his job with a New York firm and eats out with the girl-friend he is too maladjusted to marry. — R. G. G. PRICE

Zazie. Raymond Queneau. (Trans. Barbara Wright). *The Bodley Head*, 12/6

The zeitgeist is busy. First there was Nabokov's *Lolita*, then James Purdy's *Malcolm*, and now we have Raymond Queneau's *Zazie*. In all three a precocious child is taken through a mad, surrealist funfair of grotesques and clowns, to emerge with "experience" . . . and with a lesson

in innocence for the others in the tale. But while Nabokov and Purdy had serious intentions, Queneau, I believe, does not. The dustcover hints that *Zazie* has untold depths of meaning, but they are not there in the tale. It is surely a piece of surrealist popularization, the absurd end of avant-gardism where all the tricks are used for cuteness and *chic*. The basic joke is that the heroine, a girl of eleven who comes to Paris and wants to get underground into the Metro (but it's on strike) knows a couple of dirty words and understands everything about sex. Paris is amazed. Her two-day stay over, she tells her mother, who has left her to meet her lover, "I've aged." You should see me.

M. Queneau is a writer of interest; for that reason, there is a temptation to take *Zazie* as more than it is; what it is, to use his own terminology, is an exercise in style. I don't know whether it is this use of the stock in trade of surrealism to deck out a piece of pure slapstick that has made it so successful in Paris. Or is it the pathetically coy sauciness? I must say I find the whole thing rather a pity—it gives both surrealism and pornography a bad name. — MALCOLM BRADBURY

CRICKET COMMENTARY

Bowler's Turn. Ian Peebles. *Souvenir Press*, 16/-

West Indies Revisited. E. W. Swanton. *Heinemann*, 21/-

After his delightful *Batter's Castle*, it was right and proper that Ian Peebles should turn his arm over for the bowlers. Their spell is equally delightful. This is a book full of wit and charm and expert theory, and the only valid criticism from the cricketing viewpoint is that it gets itself run out far too soon. There is a short account of the winter's tour of the West Indies, splendid literary snapshots of the heroes of the 'twenties and 'thirties, and sound comment on the game's future and possible legislation. Like many more of cricket's philosophers Peebles favours—with qualifications—revision of the l.b.w. rule, week-end instead of six-day cricket, and faster wickets. His advice to the young performer is learn "to hit the ball first and learn to defend later," "learn to spin first and learn control once you have mastered the mechanics of your craft." It is only fair to add that other authorities preach that defence and length come first. The runs and the bowling guile are supposed to come later.

The blurb describes Mr. Swanton as "the doyen of cricket writers." Accurately. E. W. Swanton's standards of comment and analysis are exemplary: he is utterly reliable and always busily constructive. He is apt to eschew the more florid strokes of the cricket reporter, so that his commentary lacks the dash and literary felicity of Cardus or Alan Ross; but day-in-day-out he is the most satisfying performer and his pen is classically straight. Here he details the exploits of the last M.C.C. tourists in the West Indies, each match coming alive



"No more for me, thanks, I have to wash up."

excitingly. No one has done more for English cricket in the West Indies than Jim Swanton, and in this book his deep admiration for the islanders, their attitude to the game and their fine innate sportsmanship is a pervasive theme. An excellent piece of holiday reading for all cricket-lovers.

— BERNARD HOLLOWOOD

REGIONAL SHORT STORIES

Irish Short Stories. Edited by Valentin Iremonger. *Faber, 15/-*

South African Stories. Edited by David Wright. *Faber, 16/-*

A collection of short stories makes an unsatisfactory read, especially if the stories are by various hands. It is pleasant to settle down with one author, and distracting to be whirled away by another. Each of the present collections claims to be the best of its kind, but this is no help either. The best of fifteen stories in the Irish book is, naturally, *The Dead* by James Joyce. It is a mistake to begin (as I did) by re-reading this masterpiece. In comparison the other stories are no more than warmed-up Irish stew. The bigoted priests and the whimsical drunks rehearse their accustomed roles. Stranded between religion and drink, the women are their stoical selves. The low spirits of the characters influence even the weather—in these stories it is nearly always raining. Even astringent writers like Frank O'Connor and Sean O'Faolain seem to soften up in this company. It is good, though, that some of the least squashy writing is by the youngest contributors, Maurice Kennedy and John Montague.

South Africa is another country with a disastrous history. There is a belief that social stress breeds good writing. Actually, writers seem to do best in the calm spells between the crises. There is no better story about racial conflict in the South African collection than William Plomer's *The Child of Queen Victoria*, written in the early 'twenties. Later writers who impress include Doris Lessing and Bertha Goudvis, and there is a fine story by Dan Jacobson called *A Day in the Country* that has the strength and delicacy of Chekhov. There are no stories here by black writers, but black men appear frequently as characters. They are always sad, acquiescent figures who rarely show any signs of intelligence or a sense of humour. The stories in which they appear seem dated already.

— PETER DUVAL SMITH

AN ENGINEERING FAMILY

George and Robert Stephenson. L. T. C. Rolt. *Longmans, 30/-*

George Stephenson, besides begetting his distinguished son Robert, was also the father of the world's best known locomotive, the Rocket. With the authority of a practical engineer Mr. Rolt traces the careers of both Stephensons, from the early eighteen hundreds, when George invented a safety lamp in the minefields of Northumberland, to Robert's last masterpiece, the tubular

bridge across the Saint Lawrence at Montreal, which was opened in 1859 six weeks after its creator's death. Mr. Rolt suggests that William Huskisson's death under the wheels of the Rocket at the opening of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway was the result of an attempt to bring about a reconciliation between the Duke of Wellington and the leader of the more liberal Tories. He contrasts this tragic occasion with a trial run a few weeks earlier. Then George Stephenson had the charming young actress Fanny Kemble riding with him on the engine. She was utterly undaunted by this new mechanical monster, which she referred to as "a snorting little animal which I felt rather inclined to pat." Special mention should be made of Biro's excellent jacket.

— VIOLET POWELL

CHARM, VIVACITY, ERROR

Nancy Astor. Maurice Collis. *Faber, 21/-*

This is a string of anecdotes about Lady Astor as Virginian heiress, Edwardian hostess, Member of Parliament, Lady Mayoress and Anglo-American getter-together. Mr. Collis praises her kindness and enterprise and humour but does not seriously attempt to place her among politicians. The innumerable examples of her gay repartee range from sparrow-quick cross-talk to what seems, divorced from her twinkle, mere schoolboy rudeness.

Her Parliamentary interjections enlivened the proceedings but did not, that one can see, advance the causes in which she believed. Apparently she never read much or took much part in the humdrum work of the House. Her prepared speeches were prepared by her secretaries and her improvisations depended on light-hearted overstatements and anecdote rather than on the presentation of arguments. The gift of attracting attention is, after all, only a preliminary gift. On most major issues Lady Astor has been wrong and if her charm and vivacity have obscured the fact that is, perhaps, one of the dangers of charm and vivacity in public life.

— R. G. G. P.



P & O PARADE

These Splendid Ships. David Devine. *Muller, 25/-*

Between the *William Fawcett*, a wooden paddle steamer of 206 tons built in 1828 with engines of 60 h.p., and the *Canberra*, with a gross tonnage of 45,000, a length of 820 feet and a beam of 102 feet, lies more than a century of the eventful history of the Peninsular and Oriental line. It is a story of imagination, enterprise and intrigue, starting with steady losses until a mail contract was secured in 1837, progressing by way of a major contribution to the tremendous rise in nineteenth century trade, recovering from the loss of almost a million and a quarter tons of ships during the last world war to the vigorous P & O group of to-day. Excellent reading with a wide appeal.

— A. V.



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FOR WOMEN



Happy Spoiling

HAVING tea recently in a small-town tea-shop, my suspicions were aroused by a touch of that flat, flaccid flavour one associates with wet dish-cloths, and I looked into the pot. Sure enough—tea-bags! For foreigners who pale at the very sight of a tea-leaf, all right—but in the heart of the sturdy West Country! "What a pity," I said to the waitress afterwards, "that you use tea-bags here." "Oh yes," she replied, genially. "We've been doing it for some time now. Spoils the flavour, doesn't it?" And she went off, gratified.

This attitude of frank, "aware" spoiling as a means of adding to the gaiety of nations interested me. It opens up whole new vistas for the fuller enjoyment of life.

You can spoil a home-made beef stew very nicely, for instance, by adding a lot of tinned carrots, or a good red wine by keeping it on ice. And have you ever tried topping up a Cointreau with Coca-Cola? They are far ahead of us in the New World in this, as in so many other respects. If you take all the doors out of your house, for instance, it spoils all chance of peace and quiet, or refuge from the children.

In spoiling coffee, as is well-known, Britain leads the world. A student I knew, who washed up in a highly respectable café during her vacation, started, after a few days, to pour away the contents of a certain unsavoury cauldron which had been steaming on the stove since her arrival, thinking it was one of those grim pieces put to soak by a succession of daunted washers-up before her. When the chef saw this he called out: "That's right, dear, throw out all the coffee." A remnant was hastily rescued for some customers who had just ordered it, and they all took two cups. Excellent spoiling this.

There are other ways. I was once at

a dinner party where the coffee afterwards was noticeably odd. It was discovered that we were drinking the gravy, the coffee having been previously enjoyed over the entrée. You see—both coffee and gravy beautifully spoiled with no trouble at all.

Good spoiling can be done with clothes. A few pieces of costume—or even real—jewellery at strategic points can spoil the whole intention of a plain little suit. For new ideas in spoiling read all the women's magazines and do everything they say, regardless.

The possibilities for spoiling the countryside are, of course, limited only

by the extent of our island, and very little help is needed in this. I saw a building site nicely spoiled the other day. Instead of being built round the hillside, facing the view, terrace-wise, on Bath lines, the identical one-storey residences ran in two straight lines up the hill, with about four inches between them, so that each one spoiled the view for its neighbour in a most efficient way. The site as a whole was a veritable little masterpiece of spoiling.

A popular form of spoiling just now is turning hairdressing establishments fitted with private cubicles into those of the "open" type. No more decent privacy, girls! Like those unfortunate chickens you see roasting in tiers, plucked and trussed, in full view of the public gaze, we now sit in scarlet rows, hideous to behold, while the voices of the assistants, calling things like "Take Mrs. Brown out, dear, she's done," or "Mrs. Smith's hot, better cool her off," or "Mrs. Henley-Cooper needs an egg, dear," fly round the room for all to hear. The hairdresser tells me many of the customers complain a bit, "but it's just what you're used to, isn't it?"

You see? It doesn't matter in the least what people *think* they like. Just carry on spoiling and they'll soon like what they get, just as the fox enjoys being hunted *really*. It's the spoiling itself that's such fun.

—FRANCES KOENIG

Jet Baby Sleeps Faster than Sound

THE export of a baby by air with a view to subsequent re-import—to borrow the idiom of Customs and Excise—is a less daunting business than might be supposed. It even has certain positive points of appeal which parents should not overlook. The first and most beguiling is that it is the only known way of getting the better of an airline financially.

The international air cartel, otherwise implacably dedicated to tariff excess, has an unexpected weakness for babies, who are allowed to travel for one tenth of the normal fare until they are two, when they are upgraded to the rank of child and half-fare.

A return ticket to Rome for £5 10s. is not bad, even if a one-year-old is a little young to appreciate the Vatican

Museum or the night clubs, and it is certainly cheaper than the costly English kennels now increasingly available for parents who wish to travel light and childless.

A year ago, when my own researches into the matter began, the position was even more attractive. At that time the Treasury, of all people, drooled no less fondly than the airlines. When the grown-up foreign travel allowance was £100, the Treasury allowed the baby an extra £70—an invaluable bounty, since the most prodigal infant was unlikely to consume milk and Paddi Pads to the value of £70 (or 119,000 lire) in a fortnight, and in practice could be wholly sustained on *pasta* deducted at no cost from the daily ration of Mother and Father.

Against this, of course, had to be set the fact that relatively few piggy-banks habitually contained £70, and the deficit tended to have to be made up by Father. Anyway, the question no longer arises. When the adult allowance was increased recently, the baby allowance disappeared. With a bachelor Chancellor, this was doubtless inevitable.

Nevertheless one retains a feeling of nostalgic gratitude to B.E.A. for that first cheap ticket romantically designating one's daughter as Infant Majdalany (1 year, ten per cent): and to the Treasury for providing, so to speak, the Campari.

There are other ways in which an airborne tot can be helpful.

Fellow passengers avoid one like the plague.

There is at last a use for those ludicrous sweets which airlines think we want to suck whenever we leave the ground.

Immigration officers, especially in Latin countries, hasten to serve a woman proffering a baby as well as a passport.

There are some practical points to be noted, if you contemplate taking Infant Carruthers (1 year, ten per cent) with you this year.

There are three things of which you should be warned.

There is no separate baggage allowance for an infant. This means that Father's 44 lbs., which Mother in any case will reduce by half, must further include a folding push-cart and quantities of baby equipment.

The solution to this problem is the portable cot in which the baby travels, and which is not weighed. If shrewdly packed a large portable cot can absorb, besides a baby, a surprising load of trousers, shirts, shoes and underwater swimming equipment, and still leave room for a bottle of Scotch.

The second warning relates to the widespread belief that the presence of a baby is a guarantee of loving V.I.P. treatment all along the line.

This turns out to be a front office myth. Nothing freezes the smile on the face of a B.E.A. hostess faster than the sight of an impending baby. Once the stampede towards the tarmac begins, you may as well accept the fact that you are on your own. The only consolation is that if you do succeed in fighting your way into the aircraft without having the cot knocked out of your hand, everyone will do his best not to sit next to you.

And the last warning. At the time of writing, all efforts to justify the issue of two hundred duty-free cigarettes to a fare-paying infant have failed.

— FRED MAJDALANY

Lament

WHEN I was a third of the lass I am,
Lissom and slick on the Saturday stroll,
(Sighed the old has-been, putting on inches)

Little I knew about sugar and starch,
But batted on doughnuts heavy with jam,
Meringues and éclairs and spinning Swiss roll—
Now if I take one my girdle pinches—
But oh! I was jimp as a sapling larch.

When I was a flimsy bride and a bit,
With time to kill and a middle to show,
(Sighed the old has-been, tired like a lorry)
If I had a mind some dresses to buy,
They'd bring out a baker's dozen to fit
Me, with sweet coffee and pastries aglow.
Soon, ten stone two, I'd learned to be sorry
If I looked a measly spud in the eye.

Now I am a split-belt dame and a half,
Totting up calories, praying for sense,
(Sighed the old has-been, fighting with zippers)
With the pointer nearly at thirteen stone,
I, prodigal, shrink from the fatted calf.
Cold comfort to think a hundred years hence—
While you tuck into porridge and kippers—
I'll be, without trying, nothing but bone.

— T. R. JOHNSON



"I want a sympathy card for my husband. He's just lost his divorce suit."

Toby Competitions

No. 121—Splendid Composition

THE season of holiday snaps is upon us. Try to compose six comments—bright, interested and not repetitive—to make on the inevitable collection offered for your inspection.

A framed *Punch* original, to be selected from all available drawings, is offered for the best entry. Runners-up receive a one-guinea book token. Entries by first post on Wednesday, July 13. Address to TOBY COMPETITION No. 121, *Punch*, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.

Report on Competition No. 118 (Testamentary)

It says much for the character of our competitors that they found the task of composing an unpleasing codicil to a will so uninspiring. The pet aversions of some entrants were natural butts and the marathon walk from John o' Groats to Land's End is still sufficiently fresh to be a testing ordeal.

The winner is

A. L. LITTLETON
PEARTREES
SHERFORD
TAUNTON, SOMERSET

THIS IS THE FIRST CODICIL to the Will of the WALTER SHACKLETON FROBISHER-HAWKINS.

IN CONTEMPLATION of the invertebrate poltroons to-day inheriting this blessed earth I HEREBY REVOKE the gifts contained in my Will and

I GIVE £20,000 to the first of my descendants who returns alive from Mars.

I GIVE £10,000 to the first of these who climbs the South Face of Everest alone and without oxygen.

I GIVE £7,000 to the first of these who traverses by rowing boat the River Amazon.

I GIVE the residue to my dear Wife and I DECLARE that it shall be paid to her on the first occasion on which she walks without navigational assistance from St. James's Steps to Piccadilly Circus.

Book tokens go to the following entries:

To my daughter, Judith Georgina Margaret, I leave my house, land and all my worldly possessions therein on the condition that it should be run as either an hotel, a college for gardeners or a rest-house for disappointed Beatniks.

My cash and capital are to be put into a trust. My widow, three daughters and nine grandchildren will each have an equal share in the trust. No income or capital can be drawn from the trust until the will is contested by a legatee. If this happens, the contesting legatee will lose his share to the others. If the others pay compensation for this loss, all the capital will go untied to a charity.

C. O. M. Judd, c/o Mrs. Galtrey, 96 Parkview Court, London, S.W.6

Since I signed my will, it has occurred to me that, as I have thereby conferred such great benefits upon so many people, it is only fair that they should do something for me in return.

The fact is that I have been a sinner, though not in the least a miserable one, and so I am appending this codicil containing the proviso that any person benefitting under my will must attend church twice every Sunday for the rest of his or her life in order to offer up prayers for the well-being of my soul.

G. J. Blundell, Littlewood, East Malling Kent

I, A. C. TATE of Aldermaster Sulphuric Acid Manufacturer, declare that to be a Codicil to my last Will dated the 29th day of February, 1948. Whereas I have in my said Will given and bequeathed to each of my three grandchildren a legacy of Two thousand pounds I do hereby revoke my said Will so far as it relates to such legacies and this for the following reasons. Of my three said grandchildren Gervase, after a hectic career at Oxford, has gone down without a degree, Giles in spite of repeated requests has failed to remove his ridiculous sideboards and Gladys has declined to discard her disreputable jeans.

W. J. Eady, 39 Heathfield Road, Seaford, Sussex

To my mother, Dorothy Maud Hawkins—£15 per year for life to be expended purchasing shoes that fit.

To my great-aunt, Henrietta Paul Victoria Stewardson—£20 to be used in buying records by Eartha Kitt, Count Basie and Humphrey Lyttelton.

To my wife, Anna May Hawkins—£10 to be spent on a course with any French chef of her choosing.

To my daughter, Patricia Madeleine Hawkins—£50 for use in any way other than purchasing clothes, records or cosmetics.

To my son, Roger Mark Hawkins—The remainder of my worldly goods, to be received after a period of five years, provided that his hair never exceeds 1½" length during that time.

Graham Mott, Riv-Vue, Watton-at-Stone, Herts

WHEREAS by my said Will I bequeathed to my nephew John Smith the contents of my cellars at Ragwort Hall and WHEREAS subsequent to the execution of my said Will my views on alcohol have changed but failing health has prevented me from disposing satisfactorily of such contents NOW I hereby REVOKE such bequest and in place thereof BEQUEATH to my said nephew the sum of One hundred pounds (£100) provided that within six months of my death he shall himself possess the entire contents of my said cellars in the River Ragwort.

J. T. Race, 1 Scarth Road, Barnet, S.W.13



"I think he's using the Paddy O'Reilly opening."

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